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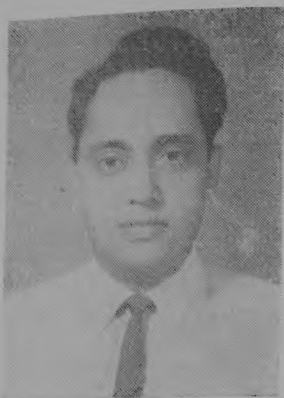
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The views expressed in SHANMUKHA are the writer's own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the publishers.



### THE PIOUS PILGRIM

The Managing Committee and the Board of Trustees of Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts and Sangeetha Sabha record with profound sorrow, the sudden and untimely demise of Sri S. Ananthaseshan, one of the Hon. Secretaries of the Sabha.

Ananthaseshan was on a pilgrimage tour to Sabarimala and other important temples in Kerala and Tamil Nadu. After having the graceful and divine Darshan of Lord Ayyappa at Sabarimala on the 4th and 5th January, 1993 and conducting Sasthapreethi at his native Village Elathur, near Tenkasi, on 6th, he continued his pilgrimage with his entourage on the 7th to Kanyakumari. Enroute, at Suchindram, he suffered a massive heart attack and the end came sudden at 1.30 p.m. at a hospital at Nagercoil, leaving friends and well-wishers shocked, beyond words. Pious and magnanimous, he was snatched away at the age of 54.

Until his last days Ananthaseshan was actively involved in various social, cultural, religious and educational activities. He had been continuously serving in the Managing Committee of our Sabha since 1967. He held important offices, such as, Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer, Trustee and Convener of various sub-committees during his tenure. His all round contribution to the Sabha during this long period is invaluable and will be remembered for ever.

A pious person by nature, Ananthaseshan was actively associated with Sri Subramania Samaj for over 3 decades. He was also a member of the Managing Committee of the Kala Nilayam, an organisation devoted to theatre.

He played a stellar role in forming the "Lions Club of Chhedanagar". He always took active part in the Custom House Clearing Agents Association and was a member of the Managing Committee and Chairman of various sub-committees. He was ever eager to extend his support generously to all worthy causes. The sudden demise of Ananthaseshan is an irreparable loss to the Sabha and the other sister institutions, as well as numerous friends and well-wishers.

May his soul rest in peace.

P. S. Subramaniam

## Shanmukha

### IN FOCUS

*At the fag end of its 'teens, SHANMUKHA Wishes its Contributors, Readers and Well-wishers A Bright & Happy New Year & Pongal.*

*As SHANMUKHA started off with new aspirations and new dreams, there came a jolt in the sudden demise of one of its dynamic secretaries, Shri S. Ananthaseshan, who succumbed to a massive heart attack while on his return after a Darshan at the holy Sabarimalai. "Whom Gods love die young," and the Shanmukhananda Sabha has lost a dynamic and efficient office-bearer. May his soul rest in peace.*

*Profiles of great men and artistes contribute considerably to the history of their period. SHANMUKHA carries profiles of such stalwarts of the 19th and 20th centuries who turned new leaves in the history of music.*

*This year's Sangeetha Kalanidhi goes on the 'pulpit' delivering his 'sermon' on musical learning and practice.*

*Reports on seminars and workshops on Music & Science and Documentation on Performing Arts make strides in academic stream, as a new playwright-dramatist breathes in a fresh air with her all-woman theatre group.*

*SHANMUKHA also picks up pearls of wisdom from "Pata to Percussive Tradition" and the "Legend of Raqhuraipur".*

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## *Anantharama Bhagavathar-A Profile in Musical Courage*

If appearances are deceptive there could be no better example than Gayaka Sikhamani Palghat Anantharama Bhagavathar. Tall, well-built and burly, fair with fiery moustache and impeccably attired, this 19th century stalwart looked more a 'Payilvaan' than a Bhagavathar. The commanding personality nevertheless did command a voice diligently cultured and reinforced with musical acumen. He rose to great heights in Harikatha and for well over two decades reigned supreme in both

with extraordinary zeal and unflagging zest, he braved "currents of jealousy, parochialism, prejudice etc. Patient and persevering, he could face the ordeals and travails of apprenticeship with courage and fortitude.

Born on October 27, 1867, at Thondikulam Agraharam in the heart of Palghat town, as the second son of Krishna Sastrigal, a Sanskrit scholar conducting religious discourses, young Anantharaman, blessed with musical talent

### **VOCAL SANS VIOLIN**

Once a concert of Anantharama Bhagavathar with Violin accompaniment of Govindaswamy Pillai was arranged at the Tondai Mandalam High School Hall at Madras. It was the time when the renowned Violinist was at the peak of his career. It is reported that the overzealous fans of Pillai, fearing that the Bhagavathar may spring a surprise by singing an intricate Pallavi or Kalpana Swaras to the embarrassment of Pillai, got him (Pillai) drunk and made him unfit for performance that day. The large crowd that had gathered to listen to the stalwarts got upset when it was announced that Pillai would not accompany that day as he was unwell, and clamoured for refund of money.

Unperturbed Anantharama Bhagavathar just said, "Please stay for the performance. Just see if I cannot please you all without the violin accompaniment."

This remark had the desired effect. Even the few who collected the money came back to listen to Anantharama Bhagavathar. The Bhagavathar sang for five hours. Which was listened to with rapt attention. It turned out to be one of the excellent performances he ever gave.

the streams — as a performing musician and a Harikatha exponent, when Destiny clipped his life short at 52 years.

### **NOT A BED OF ROSES**

The life of this great son of Palghat was, sure, not a bed of roses. His was "a very telling instance of high talent wedded to indomitable courage." Fired

and sweet voice, had the fortune of having his training under Nurani Mahadeva Bhagavathar, the son of Nurani Parameswara Bhagavathar, the then Asthana Vidwan of Travancore. The seven-year stint had put him well on the road of musical presentation. Besides, to overcome the change in voice at adolescence, and to conserve

the pitch and volume, it is said, the young lad used to practise at dawn near sea-shore amidst the roar of the waves. And this yielded the expected results. The pitch and elasticity, the stamina and volume naturally lent his voice a commanding power that became the envy of his contemporaries.

It was a time when the music scene was charged with high quality classical music when composer-stalwarts like Patnam Subramanya Iyer, Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer, Pallavi Seshayyar, 'Poochi' Srinivasa Iyengar, Veena Seshanna and Tiruvotriyur Tyagayyar strode the scene. Little wonder Anantharaman was bent on scaling new high with distinction.

that Anantharaman utilised Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer's elder brother Ramaswamy Sivan's weakness for Mantrik to his advantage. Sporting a beard and pretending as a Mantrik, he rented a house adjacent to that of the Vidwan and in course of time influenced the elder one to get easy admission to their household. In two years' time he reaped a rich harvest of "Gnana", Pataanthara and repertoire and returned homewards to launch on his own as a concert artiste, at the age of twenty two and he had never looked back since then.

Anantharaman's quest for newer pastures and 'latest' trends landed him in

### ANUMANDRA 'SWEEPING' ATITARA

A concert of Anantharama Bhagavathar with Govindaswamy Pillai accompanying him on the violin was in progress. During the Alapana of the major Raga, Pillai touched the Ati Tara Shadja on the Violin and produced a delightful effect. Not to be outdone, the Bhagavathar when his turn came, continued the Alapana in Mandra Sthayi and gradually went down to Anumandra reaching the depths to Nishada and Dhaivata! And that was beyond the reach of the Violin which could touch only Mandra Shadja!

### RICH HARVEST OF 'GNANA'

His quest for proficiency took him to Tiruvayyaru where he wanted to gain knowledge in Sangeetha Lakshya and Lakshana from Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer, a versatile genins. But the maestro was not easy to approach, nor did he easily take anyone as disciple. In fact, he hardly had time to teach! Family sources indicate that Anantharaman became an 'Ekalavya' and developed the impeccable Lakshya and Lakshana Gnana of the great maestro. However, the biographical notings of his disciple Rama Bhagavathar, later corroborated by Prof. P. Sambamoorthy, reveal

Madras, the capital of the then Presidency. While benefiting much from listening to the stalwart of the day, Patnam Subramanya Iyer, a chance meet with the then doyen of Harikatha, Pandit Lakshmanachar, brought about a turning point in his life. From a concert musician to a Harikatha exponent, it was a great leap forward. His apprenticeship under the great Guru Lakshmanachar for some years, and his knowledge of Sanskrit, Malayalam, Tamil and Telugu, coupled with his musical acumen and imposing voice gave him a new thrust in the art of Harikatha. And he became Anantharama Bhagavathar adding a new di-

mension to the Harikatha, by singing himself the relevant compositions with improvisations besides enunciating the 'Katha' and not relying on a second voice.

### TANJORE-TRAVANCORE BANIS

By 30, Bhagavathar's became a household name in the South. An invitation from Sri-la-Sri Vaidyanatha Thambiran, the then Pandarasannidhi of Tiruvavaduturai Adheenam, sent Anantharama Bhagavathar to Kumbakonam, where, it is learnt, he imbibed the technique of Tanjore style in its entirety. Perhaps the assimilation of Tanjore and Travancore Banis gave his music a grandeur which, mingled with his commanding vocal power and the new experience in Harikatha, made him a 'Jambavan' rightaway.

Back in Madras, the Bhagavathar scaled higher and higher, with stalwarts Tirukkodikaval Krishna Iyer, Govindaswamy Pillai, Azhaganambi Pillai and Pudukkotai Dakshinamoorthy Pillai ever willing to accompany him.

The command and respect this 'hard to please purist par excellence' enjoyed could be gauged from the instances that took place in his performances. (See Box).

To his "Gana Gandharva" was added 'Gayaka Sikhamani' at the court of the Maharaja of Mysore who not only made the Bhagavathar an Asthana Vidwan but also invited him for the annual Dussehra festival. Gifts of gold and diamond were showered on him. His gold chain, the "Veera Sangli", had a story of "Sangita Sikhitcha" behind it (See Box).

### "SANGITA SIKITCHA"

At a recital before the Raja of Cochin once, Anantharama Bhagavathar was asked to sing only for fifteen minutes as the Raja was indisposed. But once the Bhagavathar started off with the Alapana of Hamsadhwani, the Raja requested that the concert be continued as he felt quite all right and "indisposition vanished"! After the 4-hour concert the Raja presented him with the 'Veera Sangli', gold chain and other gifts for the 'magic of his music'.

It was in Kumbakonam that Bhagavathar had shared a house with the equally renowned Umayalpuram Swaminatha Bhagavathar — a rare opportunity for two stylists to interact. And it was during this period that the great guru and his 'abhimaana' chela Rama Bhagavathar met and their bond remained unbroken till the guru breathed his last.

Accolades and awards were showered on him. The Sannidhanam's gold "Yagnopaveetham" and the title of 'Gana Gandharva' at that early age was much to be cherished.

### PURE RAGA — RICH SWEETNESS

But nothing could surpass the praise he elicited from some of his great contemporaries. For Tirukkodikaval Krishna Iyer, the Violin wizard, to stop in a mid-concert only to spontaneously pay an unstinted tribute to the Bhagavathar's musical genius, was a rare occurrence. And Veena Dhanammal, who spoke only through her Veena, had this to say: "No vocalist could distil the purity of a Raga and endow it with rich sweetness as Anantharama Bhagavathar could."

In his own forthright 'Bani', Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar once said, "I had the privilege of hearing the music of this great Vidwan very often during my younger days. I recollect that his performance which lasted for 4 or 5 hours would consist of only three or four songs. In those days when Palghat Anantharama Bhagavathar sang in one place, no Vidwan would sing there because of his admirable voice and the quality of music which echoed in the air for a longer duration."

The 125th birth anniversary of this Gayaka Sikhamani is just past and it is only in the fitness of things that the music world remembers this doyen

whose life story is "a great profile in musical courage" and imparts a lesson to the rising stars of the younger generation.

It is also heartening that the family of the Bhagavathar has well preserved its musical inheritance in the modern milieu. Under his daughter's careful grooming, the music of the maestro rings through grandsons, and grand daughters. "Naada Brahmam", the 12-year old music institution founded by grandson T. S. Anantharaman, is making progressive strides in the field of music education.

(Compiled from family collections)

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## Bharati—The Titan of Tamil Music

By

Dr. SAKUNTALA RAMASWAMY

Subramania Bharati was one of the greatest stars in the firmament of modern Indian poetry and supreme among the 20th century poets of Tamil Nadu. His unique style, simple and sweet language won him the status of a national poet. He heralded a new epoch in the history of Tamil literature. He exercised a powerful influence on the life and thoughts of Indian people, not only in the Tamil speaking region, but far beyond that.

new ideas were contending against each other. It was at this time that Bharati emerged as a man of composite vision and clear ideas and tried to resolve these contradictory and conventional ideas, rising above narrow dogmas and sectarian beliefs. It is appropriate that we remember the great champion of national integration today, whose philosophy and political thoughts sound so very relevant even after three quarters of a century.

Bharati was a great visionary who was far ahead of his times. His vision extended beyond Tamil Nadu, in fact, beyond the confines of India. He perceived India as a whole; he was indeed a strong apostle of national integration. For him India was one, its soul one, its philosophy one, the strains of its melody one, its ideals and aspirations one. He considered himself an Indian first and a Tamilian only next. Through his fiery poems he raised the spirit of patriotism to a lofty height of a religion. His thoughts were noble, daring, startlingly new and totally unconventional. He was one of the few poets who had the courage to challenge the world and proclaim his thoughts freely without any inhibitions. A great mystic, he epitomised everything that was great in Indian heritage and culture. He wanted the legacy of India always growing in richness and content.

As a trend-setter in literary and musical fields, Bharati was a class apart. In his compositions we find poetic excellence, spiritual values, patriotism, all clothed in simple language and scintillating music which gave his songs the unique distinction.

Yet another hallmark of Bharati was the way he took off his songs with a characteristic and suggestive phrase, conveying to us in a nutshell in the first two lines the entire theme of the song that is to follow. Going through the first lines of the song is also enough for us to gauge the depth, mood, matter and eloquence of his poems.

As a connoisseur of literary arts he heralded a new era in Tamil literature, revolutionising the poetic style, discovering new forms, new presentations, new themes. This involved a colossal task of breaking through established conventions and tastes. Bharati achieved this with immense success. His uncanny perception into the distant future and his keen sense of judgement

### A VISIONARY, A TREND-SETTER

Bharati lived and worked in an age of rapid change when many old and



to feel the pulse of common people gave him the necessary versatility. He used a language inimitably simple and at the same time powerful, which appealed to the most scholarly as well as the unlettered. His songs were the spontaneous expression of his inner vision and experience, certainly not the product of deliberate and conscious contrivance. He was the master of all varieties, from the simplest of folk tunes to the most emblematic verses.

### "BHARATI ERA"

Bharati saw with great anguish and agony the deplorable level to which Tamil poetry had sunk in the last three or four centuries. He realised that the degeneration was mainly due to the poets themselves who resorted to an archaic and difficult language with mere verbal embellishments lacking in sincerity and poetic delight, rather than employ a simple and smooth language understood and appreciated by the common people. It was at such a time that Bharati appeared as a saviour on the literary scene and swept like a wave stealing everybody's heart by his simple creations. He made literary Tamil sound so simple and natural, above all easily comprehensible. His language was totally free from the shackles of rigidly laid-down conventions and complex poetic formulae. He worked hard to free Tamil language from stagnation, decay and imposed sterility. In fact, the time was just ripe for a renaissance. The Tamil masses were eager to welcome the change and heralded the new wave with utmost enthusiasm. Thus dawned the Bharati era in Tamil literature and culture.

### GREAT LEAP FORWARD

Bharati's active literary career spanned less than two decades but within

that time Tamil literary edifice came surging ahead and took a great leap forward, loosening itself from the rigid traditional orthodoxy. The result was a new Tamil poetry which came close to the people, which reached their hearts, which raised their feelings awakening in them the sense of patriotism and a great commitment to the national cause. The man behind the upsurge understood the psyche of the common man. He was able to go deep into their milieu, find out what they wanted. No wonder the people took to his songs like cattle to greener pastures. Since the 'thirties his poems were on everybody's lips. They became the holy chant for the nationalists as well as for the revolutionaries. No gathering in the freedom movement was complete without the soulful rendering of Bharati's songs and no event of national importance, without reciting his poems.

### A SOULFUL SINGER

Bharati himself used to render his songs in his own inimitable style and mesmerise the crowd, taking them over completely. The crowd went crazy, demanding more and more from him. The familiar figure of Bharati in his white turban and black coat was enough to turn the crowd to a frenzy. Many of the Marina Beach meetings saw Bharati rendering his songs in his emotion-laden voice full of fiery patriotism. It evoked such a deep impression on the public that they religiously started learning his songs and singing them on every possible occasion.

Bharati had a rich and powerful voice; like a temple bell it had all the richness and vibrancy. According to one of his close friends and associates, Va. Ra., Bharati had a strong desire to become a performing musician. At one

stage he had taken up the challenge seriously and pursued the hobby in right earnest. His practice sessions starting quite early in the morning, would sometimes continue late into the night. Like a truly dedicated student he pursued the exercise with total dedication.

### INIMITABLE SIMPLICITY

His love for music and his passionate desire to become a good singer urged him in his mission. He was not satisfied with being only a composer; he wanted to take his songs to a larger audience. Commenting on the quality of Bharati's voice, his friend Va. Ra. has said that Bharati had such a deep, resonant voice that it could easily be compared with the best artistes in the music field in those days. The power of his voice was such that he could reach a large audience to the last man effortlessly, without any microphone. He sang like a man possessed and enchanted his listeners endlessly. He not only earned their admiration but also their affection. Quite often while performing, he became so dramatic and emotionally involved that his histrionics sometimes appeared bizarre. The audience responded spontaneously to his gestures

and struck an utmost rapport with him. Bharati alone could do this magic with the crowd, playing with his voice with amazing aplomb.

Yet another close friend of Bharati, and a great scholar and patriot of the time, V. V. S. Iyer, pays a glowing tribute to this great master :

"On the Pondicherry seashore, on peaceful evenings when the sun is setting and the moon rising in all its splendour, one should hear Bharati sing his newly composed songs in his emotion-charged deep voice. The thrill you experience is beyond anybody's imagination. Each song was worth a fortune. Nobody could sing his songs the way he sang".

Bharati was really inimitable.

It is unfortunate that we do not have even a single song of Bharati recorded in his own voice nor a single speech or event in his life filmed. Of course these technologies had not reached us by then. Today we have scores of singers singing his songs in so many versions throughout the length and breadth of India and even in far-off countries. The question lingering in our minds is : have we lost the real spirit of Bharati in the bargain ?

### CONFLUENCE OF TEARS

Gently he placed his hands on his blind brother standing in the Pooja room in a trance with hands folded in devout prayer and, with poignant tenderness, whispered :

"What is it you are praying for, dear ?"

"Why ? Your welfare, brother".

"Mine ? ... Stupid ... God's grace is required for you ... not me ! We have been praying ..."

"No brother, it is by God's grace, I am withoutless eyesight. It is joy not to have it again. I would not exchange my loving brother for my eye-sight. I cannot lose this precious gift of God."

Two loving hearts melted. Divine tears gushed out of two pairs of eyes in spiritual unison. Mahakavi Subramania Bharati called them "En nenjil udhiram kottudadi".

The World is sustained by the few drops of such tears !

— Courtesy : "A Garland"

By N. Rajagopalan

## HOMAGE TO A GURU, A NADA YOGI

Many a flower is indeed born to bloom unseen. Many musicians with a fine record of services to the Muse remain largely obscure and they go unnoticed by the authorities and organisations, leave alone receiving any recognition and rewards. Our Guruji, Sangeetha Bhushanam, Sri Pallavur K. Mani Iyer was one such Mahan.

Three influences combine to create a genius in art. The first is innate flair and the ability which are gifts of God. The second is heredity and the third, an unrelenting practice and toil. The music of our Guru represented the confluence of these three streams. But here was a genius, who because of his unostentatious nature coupled with his highly principled outlook let his vast and profound Vidwat go unnoticed.

Two personality traits shaped his life and career. One was his all consuming and total devotion to Karnatak Classical music and the other his single-mindedness in fixing a goal for himself and working towards it, no matter how arduous the path might seem.

Born in a musical family, he had his musical training under great Vidwans of eminence like Sri Sabesa Iyer and Sri Tanjavur Ponniah at the Annamalai University where he did his Sangeetha Bhushanam course. This, coupled with the knowledge and techniques acquired during his Gurukulavasam with, Sri Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar inculcated in him great depths of enunciation as regards both raga and laya aspects.

While emphasising the importance of laya, the late S. Balachander once remarked that when one had complete mastery over laya, one could almost reach the angels. Our Guru too believed in this. Evolving gradually towards expertise in the laya and tala aspects of music his Manodharma became a blend of Vyavahara, Jaathi and Gathi-bhedas displaying his scholarship and sparkling quality in Swara Kalpana.

### SANCHARI SINGING

Of late, there is a general awareness of the Sahitya aspect of a musical piece slowly setting in among musicians. Mani Iyer was almost fastidious about the correct splitting of the Sahitya and the exact pronunciation of the words. He was so particular because he felt, that when one sang, the meaning of the song should remain unimpaired, and should also easily be understood by the listeners. There was another important reason for his showing utmost importance to Sahitya. He felt that correct enunciation of words was very much necessary in depicting the emotional fervour or the bhava aspect of our music.

His method of rendering a Kriti, was to develop the Sangathis so very gradually and gracefully, starting from a simple outline of the Pallavi (or any other part of a Kriti) and reaching out for the consecutive swaras in succession and building up the final elaborate Sangathi of the same.

His raga sketches also followed a similar pattern. He outlined the impor-

tance of Sanchari singing. Starting with simple Sancharas, he would first bring out the Rupa of the Raga; then gradually develop the Raga, note by note (covering three octaves), using the various ranjaka prayogas, vishesha and apoorva prayogas, highlighting the raga chaaya swaras and the subtle nuances thereby giving a detailed exposition and bringing out the essence as well as swarupa of that raga.

He was a great teacher too. An unsparing taskmaster, he insisted on regular and sustained practice everyday. A very broadminded and sincere teacher, he was everwilling to share his knowledge with his students. We deem ourselves very fortunate to have received inspiration and instruction from him.

### "NITYA YOGA"

He taught his students with affection and discipline. Slightly short-tempered though, that did not dampen his spirit of teaching or affect his patience in "bringing them up." He sat with them patiently and encouraged them to be original. He strictly forbade his students from imitating any particular style of singing but was willing to accept the good points of every school. Adopt and adapt was his policy. He always advised his students to first analyse, before adopting these points and suggested that they be well adapted, well formulated and made conducive to one's style of singing.

He was very clear in elucidation of even the most difficult point and would make sure that the students' doubts were clarified. He tried to understand every student's psychology, deficiencies and paid personal attention to each

of them. He tried out every possible way and means to guide and correct them and made sure that they understood every nuance, turn and twist.

### PRACTICAL TIPS

Music education and practice to him was a Nitya Yoga and to attain a perfection in technique, he insisted on certain routine, not with mechanical precision but with artistic zest. Singing of Saralivarisais, Jantavarisais, Sadhakaravarisais, the 35 Tala Alankaras, Var-nams in Trikalas was a must. He was of the opinion that these basic lessons should be practised as often as possible as they were the key to one's musical acumen. Usages of patterns, Jaathibhedam and Gathibhedam, control over Tala, Kalapramana etc., during Manodharma singing could be attained, he believed, if these were practised regularly. One another point which he stressed was the importance of Swara notation. He encouraged his students to write down kritis in swara notation and learn. By this method, he, believed one would get used to the habit of reading and writing notations. This would enhance one's Swaragnanam as swaras were the very foundation and without which one would not know what one was singing. Also this would be of great help in noting down rare songs or some difficult passages while listening to music concerts.

A man of rich ideals and rigid principles, Mani Iyer was an honest and simple person. Humility was his hallmark. He believed everyone. He was generous to a fault.

He had great visions and brilliant ideas. He founded an institute — the Carnatic Music Institute at Khar Road,





## The Legend of Raghurajpur

Only a few months back, the great maestro of Odissi, Guru Kelucharan Mahapatra, went nostalgic recalling about his native place, Raghurajpur, an artistes' paradise.

Nature's bounty, he said, blessed the sons of the soil with artistic impetus. Right from the soft river soil down to the seeds of plants and trees, Nature's 'gifts' have inspired them into their creative urge. The arts of the region thus emanating naturally glowed in their gentle delicacy. Be it painting or sculpture or even for that matter dance, there has been a frail delicacy perceived in it. Rightly did the maestro point out that Odissi owed its suave grace to the soft Bols that the Mridang, made out of the Mitti (river soil) emitted. And there was a very close interrelation between the Chitrakala (painting) the Shilpakala (sculpture) and the Nritya (Dance form) which had synthesised the Gotipua and Devadasi traditions.

While he expatiated on the Odissi dance form, his forte, giving a graphic illustration of the little village's activities, much was left to one's imagination on the other arts.

The legend of Raghurajpur however came to limelight with the art of painting, carving brought to bold relief when the tiny village got an exposure recently in a National daily in an article by researchers who have been exploring regions of art origins. The high-lights of the exposure are that the tiny village has no idlers; each one, especially the male, is either an artiste or an apprentice. The artists have their own

co-operative to market their art creations and they have participated in the Festivals of India abroad, thus gaining international focus. Theirs have been an educating profession as the epics of the country are pictorially interpreted in their paintings. And what more, while the dancers have moved away to the cities 'taking their art to the audience', people come to the chitrakars to look into their art and book their orders.

The tale of the village is better told in the authors' own words. Following are excerpts from Hugh and Colleen Gantzer's write up in *Indian Express* :

"We have come across some artists' colonies, but we've seen only one real artists' village. It's ... Raghurajpur, ... not far from Puri ...

"It's not much of a village to look at. Two roads, two facing rows of houses on high plinths approached by steps, most with thatched roofs ... A small shrine. A few coconut palms in the background. A cycle leaning against a flight of steps. And that's all. No cars, no old men smoking hookahs or beedis. No idlers, in fact.

"... It looked like everyone was an artist and everyone was at work. And those who were too young to work were apprenticed to senior artists, learning their trade.

"They all sat in the verandahs of the houses, surrounded by their pots of paints or styluses and they were all creating works that would be marketed through their own co-operative shop. It was an incredibly industrious sight. And from one of the senior artists a Patachitrakar named Mahapatra, the commonest name in the village, we learnt the legend of the founding of Raghurajpur.

Many generations ago, we were told as we sat on a string-bed *khatia*, the village was established as a colony of artists by unknown Maharaja. "He was a very devout man, a man who worshipped Lord Jagannath, and so he wanted artists who knew the many ways in which the Lord could be praised in art," Mahapatra said, "with wood carvings, *patachitra*, *talpatra*, stone carving and dance. These *patachitras* tell stories from the epics so that when pilgrims take them home they can remember the old tales which always teach a lesson ..."

The *patachitra* 'canvas' is prepared very carefully using various natural substances such as tamarind seeds. Finally it becomes as tough as leather. On this the artist sets to work.

First there is the frame — stylised floral forms running all around the sheet. The inner frame, on the sheet being completed by the artist, held medallions depicting individual figures out of the epics and legend. Within

that was a blue frame holding a yellow frame and then the main picture was being created in pen-fine strokes. Tales connected with the avatars of Vishnu were great favourites, particularly the lyrical ones of Lord Krishna which lent themselves well to the delicate, flowing lines of *patachitra*.

... Other artists were making bright home altars for the worship of the Trinity : Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra. In fact, there were many little wooden idols of the round eyed deities of the great temple of Puri. And they were all painted in striking, bright, primary colours.

Further on we found a man playing a sharp stylus on the semi-dried leaves on the palm. When dried this becomes an almost imperishable medium and one which has preserved our literature for centuries. Scholars call them palm-leaf manuscripts, but in Raghurajpur the skill of writing on palm leaf has been elevated to the art form of *talpatra*. Artists inscribe pictures on them with calligraphic intricacy.

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## Muthu Ramalinga Setupati - II

By

T. SANKARAN \*

Among princely states that fostered the arts of music and dance, Ramanathapuram holds an honoured place. Besides the ruling chiefs, who were discerning rasikas, other feudatory chieftains and zamindars were also noted for their cultivated and dignified taste. No wonder, therefore, that Ramanathapuram was known for promoting high ranking performers and composers. Of them, the oldest is the composer Madhura Kavi whose Padas were noted for sweet flavour. His real name was Ganapati Subbier. More than fifteen of his Padas were dedicated to his patron, Muthu Irullappa Pillai, the cultured minister of the Setu Samasthanam. His Padas are in praise of several other patrons of his time, the piece in Sourashtra is in honour of Vijaya Raghunatha Muthu Ramalinga Setupati-II, known affectionately as Dorai Raja.

During the reign of Muthu Ramalinga Setupati-II, between 1868 and 1873, there were innumerable musicians in his court but the outstanding figure was the Sethupati himself. He was a musician among princes and a prince among musicians. To him are credited *Valli Manamalai, Murugar Anubhuti, Mummozhi Maalai, Brahma Kaivalyam, Balabodham, Sarasa Sallappa Malai, Neeli Bodha, Venba Malai, Vina Vidai, Palakavi Tiratru, Gayaka Priya, Prabakara Bhajanai, Kirtanai, Rasika Ranjanam*, and several others. The

last three publications contain Kirtanas, Padas, Tillanas, Heccharikas, Todaya-mangalas and compositions of other kinds. In addition to these compositions in Tamil and Telugu, he has composed several Javalis which have been immortalised by the Enadi Sisters whose eminence in singing Javalis has never been surpassed. One of the Padas is a *Ragamalika* in 20 Ragas. And the Tala for one of the compositions is the lesser known "koo koo ku."

Several composers have immortalised their compositions and these patrons in their songs: The Tanjore Quartet, honoured by their Guru Muthuswami Dikshitar as "Bharata Sreshthas" have eulogised their patron Muthu Ramalinga Sethupati in their *Sankarabharana Pada Varnam*: "*Mathiyuhi Muthojendran maindan sarvaguna see-lan, nidhimaari pozhiyum chengai nesan Ramalingendran Mel || Ati moham, konden ||*".

Kunnakkudi Krishnier has dedicated his Kambhoji Raga Varnam to Muthu Ramalinga Setupati-II. Krishnier and Ramalinga Setupati were great friends and the musician accepted the patron's challenge to compose a Varnam in the interval between the commencement and conclusion of the patron's evening walk. That was how the Varnam *Kamalakshi* was born. The Todi Tillana, according to Rajkumar Kasinath Dorai, was a composition dedicated to

\*The author acknowledges the assistance of Sri Kasinath Dorai of Ramnad in writing this article.

Muthu Ramalinga Setupati by Kunnakudi Krishnier but it had to be dedicated to the Mysore prince by Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar with a different *ankitam*. Likewise the Pharas Padam\* with a Visessa prayoga for Pharas. Kavi Kunjara Bharati or Anai Iyer who flourished in Sivaganga between 1810-1896 was also largely influenced by the musical traditions of Ramnad. So was Kotiswara Iyer, 1879-1946, the composer in Tamil of the *Kanda Ganaamudam* in the 72 Melakartas. In a personal vein, Muthu Ramalinga Setupati has revealed his interest in music thus !

"Swarabat fiddle guitar sundari  
kanjir dholak mridanga sitar tabla  
veenai  
harmonium payindren anbirukkilenai  
purukkun taarmeniyane tanittu".

"Harmonium Fiddle Guitar Kanjir  
Maddalancheer Chittar Surabattu  
Chundari Tabela Var Yazh Dho-  
lakkivai Kanangana Muthu  
Ramalinga Setupati Kaikkamalam  
Vasikkumkaan".

The Tamil Vidwan of this Samasthanam, Satavadhani Saravanaperumal sings of the patron's Sahityam, "Isai Iyal Vallan Sevikkinnikkum Bhaktikkani Padam Keerttanaiyeettikkinum puga-zhidum payir valartanan".

Parvatavardhani Setupati was the regent from 1846-1862. Her consort was Ramaswamy Narendran. They had no issues. Muthu Virayee was the younger sister of the Regent. Her husband was Sivagnana Tevar. They had two sons; Ponnuswami Thevar was elder and the younger son was Dorai

Raja who became Muthu Ramalinga Setupati-II. They were educated well and were given opportunities to enjoy good music. They were great admirers of Ramaswamy Sivan and Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer.

The elder brother and also the minister of this prince, Ponnuswami Thevar, was responsible for bringing into print Muthu Ramalinga Setupati's works and several rare Tamil works. His kinsmen were of like feather and were men of literary and artistic bent. His maternal uncle Kottaiswami was the minister of Setu Samsthanam. His munificence resulted in the building of the Bommai Chattram through Vyasarpadi Vinayaka Mudaliar in South Mada Veethi, Mysore, Madras. The history of this choultry is to be found in several Keertanams and Tamil Padams and this anthology enshrines a new Tamil Padams by Seerkazhi Arunachala Kavirayar (1711-88), the author of the Ramanataka Keertanas.

The more well known among the descendants of the enlightened line is Bhaskara Setupati (1873-1903). The illustrious musician of Ettayapuram, Subbarama Dikshitar dedicated the Ragamalika "Gaarayam Ganna Dorayani Kalyani Gaachi Yunnadira" to him. It was Bhaskara Setupati who decorated Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer's brother, Ramaswami Sivan, with the title "Sahitya Puli" and sponsored Swami Vivekananda to the Parliament of Religions. Two scions of the line of Setupati's are Shanmuga Rajeswara Setupati who became a Minister of the Madras State and had distinguished himself as a noteworthy Tennis Star and

connoisseur of Bharata Natyam. His consort is the noted Bharata Natya exponent, Rani Jayalakshmi Nachiyar (Pandanallur). The Setupati's younger brother, a former M.P., is prince Kasi-nath Dorai, a seasoned musician trained by Sangita Vidwan C. S. Sankarasivam of Ramanathapuram. Sankara Sivam is a treasure-house of music inherited through his Guru Harikesanallur Muthiah Bhagavatar and particularly of the compositions of Muthu Ramalinga Setupati. Natya Kalanidhi Pandanallur Minakshisundaram Pillai has immortalised the aesthetic taste of Shanmuga Rajeswara Setupati in his two Varnams 'Sarasaku Neeveyani' in Vachaspathi and *Inta Kopamelara*, in Todi.

The Setupatis who were *nadopasakas* used music and dance as vehicles of worship. Armed with bows and swords from yore, these warrior princes were the protectors of pilgrims who

travelled for *Setu-Snanam*. In return for armed services to all the three rulers, the Chera, Chola and Pandya kings, these Maravars were crowned as feudatory princes of principalities. The Setupatis were Chembian Maravars and were kept at military out-posts. In the 11th century they crossed the coastal tracts into Pandiyan shores. In the Pandiyan kingdom they suffixed to their settlements 'Vira Sozha Puram'. In view of their skill on the rivers and the seas, they were hailed *Atrupaichi* and *Kadal-paichchi*. The canals dug by these Maravars came to be named 'Narayana Kaveri' and 'Raghunatha Kaveri'. These Maravars branched off into *Tiraiyars* and *Thevars*. They in puranic times are said to have helped Sri Rama in his war against Ravana and so came to be called *Tevas* (Devas).

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## READ

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## MUSIC & SCIENCE

The Centre for Science & Technology and the Dept. of Science & Technology, Govt. of India, New Delhi, sponsored a Seminar on "Music & Science" that was held at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan on November 21, 1992. The Centre for Science & Technology, Bangalore, has been working for 5 years now with the sole object of inculcating a scientific temperament among students, involving several eminent scientists. Earlier, it had organised Workshops on Physics, Mathematics, Science and released Status reports on Water Supply, Banks, Pollution Control etc. *Frontiers of Science & Technology*, a quarterly, is also being released.

The Seminar on Music & Science was inaugurated by U. D. N. Rao, former CMD, ITI, who himself is a connoisseur of music and comes from a family of supporters of music. N. Lakshman Rau, former Administrator, Bangalore Corporation and an IAS officer of Karnataka Govt., presided. K. V. Narendra, the young and enthusiastic Secretary of the Centre welcomed and explained the working of the Centre.

Nine speakers, drawn from different sections, presented papers on a variety of interesting topics. Dr. P. B. Mathur, former Deputy Director, spoke on "Science of Music and Ragas". Raga system of Indian music is one of the greatest contributions of the country to the rest of the world. This contribution may not be recognised by the West and other countries, merely on its aesthetic values. The same may, however,

be accepted in case, scientific basis is found out for the melody in Ragas; the paper was an effort in this direction, devoting itself to the two important unsolved problems of the science of music. First, relating to the basis of the Natural Scale of music and second, to the scientific basis of Ragas — the scales of melody. This work will help in providing a scientific basis and understanding of the melodies of Ragas. It may further help in predicting new ragas and correcting scales which are not ragas.

"Codification of Music" was the paper presented by Prof. S. N. Balasubramanyam of the Dept. of Organic Chemistry, I. I. Sc., Bangalore, the purpose of which was to make a case for the inclusion of information basic to the analysis and appreciation of classical music in what is called 'liberal' education. In India, the analysis and appreciation of music will, naturally, be culturally oriented in favour of what is called 'Indian'.

"Classification and Materials used in Percussion Instruments" was the topic covered by Dr. N. Somanathan of the Dept of Bio-Physics, Central Leather Research Institute, Madras. Common feature of innumerable drums used in this country is that, hides and skins are used in the construction of all drums. The type of instrument used for a specific purpose has a direct relationship with the tonal quality of the sound produced. Percussion instruments were

classified into three groups as described in *Panchamarabu*, a Tamil book; information describing the quality of sound of different instruments were collected from ancient Tamil literature and analysed with the help of statistics and correlations were studied which reveal that the basic classification was on the basis of quality of sound produced by these drums. Critical studies were made on the structure of leathers and woods used. The packing of fibre structure varies in the same leather at different locations. The knowledge obtained from the structure was useful in explaining the sound produced in different drums.

Dr. Manjula Devi, a Research student of Pandit Bhimsen Joshi, Pune, dealt with "Music and Mind" wherein the psychiatric and therapeutic aspects and tools were examined with reference to exposure to music vulnerability to stress strains. The Time theory of Ragas was also discussed.

The illustrated talk by M. V. L. Maheshkumar, CEDT, IISc., Bangalore, evinced lot of interest. 'Programmable Mrudangam' was the topic which covered a programmable Mrudangam sound generation with patterns to be played being user-programmable. For the purpose of simulation, eleven basic sounds of Mrudangam are identified and these sounds were played and

digitized at a sampling rate of 10kZ. The sound waveforms reconstructed were simulated in software. These reconstructed sounds were played back to an analog converter and the quality was found acceptable.

The paper of Dr. K. S. Raghavendra Rao, formerly of Dept of Physics, Bangalore University, on "Experimental Work on Srutis and Swaras" traced the history of the Sruti concept, Sruti experiments of Bharata and Sarangadeva, experimental determination of Swara frequencies etc.

"An Ear for Music", the paper of P. P. Rao of the Control Systems, ISRO Satellite Centre, Bangalore, dealt with Human Ear as an inverted biological harmonica. It requires some training to have an ear for music. In the course of this training one probably learns to group together his ear the sequential harmonic total information distinctly separated out. Some extent of 'trainability' in this art is perhaps inherently built into our ear/brain/mind system.

The Seminar was fairly well attended and it would be worthwhile that the proceedings are published to enable those interested to have an access to these findings with a prospect of further analysis and improvement on these ideas.

Bangalore K. Venkatram



## Documentation of Performing Arts

A workshop on "Documentation of Performing Arts" was conducted by the National Centre for Performing Arts, Bombay, at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore, from 15th September 1992, for one month.

A wide range of subjects in the form of Lectures, Practical, Listening, Screening and Presentation sessions were held. The themes included were :-

### LECTURE THEMES :

1. Elements of Cultural Musicology
2. Towards History of Hindustani Music
3. Indian Musicology — A Scholastic Model
4. Categories of Music
5. Indian Myths and Symbols
6. Myths and Symbols with special reference to Performing Arts
7. Towards History of Karnatak Music
8. Introduction to Organology
9. Theory & Culture & Performing Arts
10. Religions & Cults in India
11. Still Photography

### THEMES OF PRACTICAL SESSIONS :

1. Musical Analyses
2. Classification of songs
3. Classification of Musical Instruments
4. Transcriptions
5. Staff Notation
6. Prescriptive and Descriptive Notation

### GUIDED LISTENING SESSIONS :

1. Folk and Primitive Music of Maharashtra
2. Folk and Primitive Music of Karnataka
3. Folk and Primitive Music of Tamil Nadu

4. Folk and Primitive Music of Andhra Pradesh
5. Folk and Primitive Music of Kerala

### SCREENING SESSIONS :

Total of five screening sessions including video recordings of Fairs and Festivals of Karnataka were presented by Mr. H. L. Nage Gowda.

### DEMONSTRATION & PRESENTATION

1. "Tiger Varadachariar — A Case Study" — Dr. N. Ramanathan
2. "The structure of Raga in the Western System — Dr. Raja Ramanna.

The resource persons comprised scholars from both India and abroad. They were :

1. Dr. Ashok Ranade, Director, NCPA, Bombay.
2. Dr. S. A. K. Durga, Director, Centre for Ethnomusicology, Madras
3. Dr. Josef Kuckertz, Director, Free University, Berlin
4. Dr. Komal Kothari, Director, Sangeet Natak Akademi, Delhi
5. Prof. Nagarajan, Bangalore
6. Mr. H. L. Nage Gowda, Director, Janapada Seva, Bangalore
7. Dr. N. Ramanathan, Reader, University of Madras.
8. Dr. Raja Ramanna, Director, NIAS, Bangalore
9. Dr. K. S. Subramaniam, Reader, University of Madras
10. Dr. R. Sathyanarayana, Musicologist, Mysore.

The delegates and participants were deputed by their respective institutions from all over India.

The Workshop was held under the stewardship of the dynamic Director of the NCPA, Dr. Ashok Ranade, who had personally supervised every minute detail of the Workshop including the local hospitality for the delegates.

The NIAS where the Workshop was held had the most conducive and peaceful atmosphere to create an academic surrounding. Situated in the sprawling Indian Institute of Science Campus, it had all the infrastructure to hold this event, as well as accommodate all the participants and Resource persons. The NIAS is headed by the renowned International Scientist Dr. Raja Ramanna, who himself is a lover of music.

Most of the lectures presented during the Workshop were purposeful and highly useful for the delegates. A summary of select topics are given below :

Dr. Ashok Ranade, an International Ethnomusicologist and a musician — his approach to the wide range of subjects in the Workshop especially — proved his mettle and understanding with an analytical bent of mind. Every subject that he dealt with was excellent.

Among Dr. Ranade's lectures, "The Historicity of Indian Music" deserves special mention. Ascribing the methodology of six approaches towards constructing a meaningful historical perspective, Dr. Ranade emphasised Description, Analyses, Narration, Annals, Chronicles and Biographies, as important areas.

At any point of time historicity, he said, has distinct nearness to musical ideas, which form intellectual and emotional formulation of an individual. This would facilitate periodisation of musical history. In other words, there are several identifiable postulates for construction of musical ideas, namely :- Patronage, Musical forms, Musical instruments, Mobility of music and musicians, Relationship with language and other entertainment media.

Another lecture by him was in one of the most unspecified areas in the present day realm of musicology, namely, "Preparation of a scholastic model for Indian Musicology". No doubt, the diversity of a model and the prescribed ways of referring to an identifiable style has contributed much in this area of research. Dr. Ranade at several points of time also focused the importance to the relation of Sangita and Sastra, which is the most important scientific model.

Another feature that helps build a scholastic model is the aesthetic element which has a definite consolidated and direct effect on musicological thoughts.

Dr. Komal Kothari, a specialist on musical instruments, gave a new twist to a very popular subject of discussion, namely, Organology — a study of musical instruments, with particular emphasis of Rajasthan. His analysis included discussion on the main idioms and varieties of aerophones, cordophones, idiophones and membranophones.

Another noteworthy element of the discussion was the detailed screening sessions with descriptive notes on the instruments like :- Kamaj, Ravaj, Sur-



inga, Sarangi, Alghoja, Rola, Pavari, Ravanahasta, Orhu, Backpipe, Basali, Kongola, Satara, Basuli, Agore, Mansuri, Tanki, Shahanai, Bharni, Janthar and Kendra.

Dr. R. Sathyanarayana, an acclaimed theoretician, chose upon a topic dealing on Indian religion. His discussion included the major features of uncommon and common myths and symbols, their relation to music, function and ultimately the mythological evidences which contribute religious symbolism. The activation of myths and symbols, he says, are extraordinary, represented through Gods, semi-gods, Godheads, animals, plants, and heroes. This functional analysis revolves around four aspects, namely :- explanation, justification, traditionalisation and description. His characterisation of Pancha lakshanas : Sarga, Prathi Sarga, Vamsa, Manvanthara and Vamsanucharita on the basis of mythical heroes like, Traiaruni, Kasyapa, Savaruni, Akrti Varna, Vaisampayana and Harita are exemplary modules.

Dr. S. A. K. Durga, Director of Centre for Ethnomusicology, also discussed on a similar theme projecting the relevance of Godheads, their manifestations and the importance laid down in Indian Myths towards their cosmological Workshop and Rituals. Her deliberation with the help of pictorial documentation was educative and effective.

Another interesting session by Dr. N. Ramanathan of Madras University was very impressive. He spoke on the trends in the present day History of Karnatak Music. He said,

"What is very striking is that in our traditional literature whenever we come across any probe or discussion of origin of any aspect

of music like Swara, Tala, Raga and Vadya, the whole description is on the form of a mythological account. It is perhaps obvious that no probe into origin or evolution of things can come out with any conclusive results.

"In Karnatak Music however, history never came to be written, even by the British, till the middle of this century. In fact, the strangest thing is that there is no textual source recognised at all, till we come across to the late 19th century, and when we study the historical sources, especially the texts in a chronological order, we find that we get patches of information with each scholar gradually weeding out the inherited theory and modifying it to suit the existing practice."

He also furnished a classified and detailed list of books relating to the history of Karnatak Music, namely :-

- books relating to historical accounts of Karnatak music chiefly tracing the history of the music;
- treatises or Lakshanagrantas written during various periods in history which could be termed source books for history;
- books written on treatises or on specific aspects of music which throw light on history of Karnatak music.

Dr. K. S. Subramaniam who is both an acknowledged traditionalist and an innovative scholar in his research areas, and hails from one of the most acclaimed Karaikudi school of music style, presented an excellent lecture session on the problems concerned with the transcription of notations for musicians.

Dealing both on the inscriptive and descriptive concepts of notation Dr. KSS had selected several pieces, like,

*Sri Gana nata, Vidajaladura, Viribhoni, Sobhillu*. His transcriptory notes had lifetime utility for any practical musician.

Dr. Josef Kuckertz, whose contribution to the Indian music scenario has been universally accepted both in India and abroad, heads the International institute for Comparative Music and has specialised in Oriental Music. His lecture on musical contact between Europe and Asian Traditions had several noteworthy examples. His another lecture on Theory and Culture of Performing Arts, focusing on the Ethnomusicological attitudes is worth discussing.

In this lecture he included several authentic references from the authors like, John W. Bennett, Egon Friedell, Alan P. Marian, Stevenfeld, Theodor W. Adorna and others. According to him :

"Many cities in the Western hemisphere are today home places of different musical and theoretical styles". It is a mark of the pluralistic society of democratic countries. Here, it is in fact difficult to get an overview, even if only the institutions and circles engaged in theatre and music are to be enumerated. However, this will not be enough to understand the total music life of our people since many of us listen to different types of music at different places. So, we face a complex — or several complexes of music experience, and this fact stimulated a few musicologists in the 20th century to establish a new branch called 'Sociology of music' "

He has directed the present day scholars to analyse whether, in the division of labour during a historical

process, the ancestered evidences of culture and history would be of any relevance. In case, one wishes to explore the existence of Performing Arts and its culture in a complex society, one must consult every identifiable group and its evolution.

There may be a single blessed person who is able to draw a total picture of a large cultural unit or to compare several human cultures focusing on mutual impacts and the consequent integration on ideas and goods borrowed from neighbours. But since the 'Areas' of culture, as mentioned by Friedell, i.e., economy, state, religion etc., have their own dynamics, research is normally done with respect to only one of them. Since our field is performing arts, we would have to examine more closely music and dance within the context of culture.

Another noteworthy feature of the Workshop was the listening and screening sessions. Some of the visuals and audio visuals were highly enthralling and supportive to the main and related themes of the discussion. Though the major part of the Workshop schedule was devoted to lectures and screening sessions, a portion was also allotted to interactive communication between the delegates and Resource persons. Which was interesting and enlightening. It was totally a new experience, a month-long 'living-in' Workshop, delving into unexplored areas of research. It had opened up new avenues for methodical research in performing arts.

L. Annapoorna

## Bhagavata Mela Natakam

For the first time ever, a group of dancers and musicians belonging to the three hundred year-old-tradition of the Bhagavata Mela Natakam, performed in Bombay in December, 1992. This sacramental artform is associated with the tiny village, Melattur, and dedicated to the deity Sri Varadarajar. Although the tradition can be traced to the early 16th century, what is presented today is the genius of Melattur Venkatrama Sastri who was the court vidwan of the Maratha ruler Raja Serfoji. The Brahmin actor community originally belonged to another famous village, Kuchipudi, in the Krishna District of Andhra Pradesh. When the glorious Vijayanagar dynasty fell, the artistes were drawn towards the nucleus of all art, Tanjavur. Here the ruling Nayaks fostered the art and gifted six villages to the Bhagavattulas. Unfortunately, it is only in Melattur that this art has survived today.

The Natakam presented at the N.C.P.A. was *Rukmini Kalyanam*, which describes how Rukmini sends an epistle to Krishna requesting him to hasten before she is given away in marriage to the wicked Sisupala. The musical score was the high point of the evening, adhering to the distilled purity of the Karnataka tradition. The musical passages were woven interestingly with jatis, swaras, couplets and simple Telugu prose spoken by the actors. There were no stage properties, but the costumes were typically colourful and bright. The play had been cut short by half to suit urban impatience. As a result, the play lost much of its tempo and verve. The rustic charm and the

languorous pace transported one to the world of folklore and mythology.

It was a refreshing experience to meet these plucky young men whose tenacious efforts to keep this art alive is purely out of their devotion to the artistic duty handed down to them by their forefathers. Although all of them have modern education and hold jobs, their prime occupation is Natakam.

S. Gopalakrishnan, secretary to the Nityavidya Sangam, acts as King Bhisma and Krishna in the play. He is exploring all avenues to propagate the artform. "The Tamil Nadu Government gives us a paltry sum of Rs. 500/- per year. The Central Sangeet Natak Akademi gives us Rs. 10,000. We have been gifted a 2½ acres of land which yields Rs. 2,500 worth of paddy. In summer we clean up the land and set the stage up for the month-long festival," he says, singing an all too familiar tune!

R. Mahalingam, known as Mali, is a village administration officer in Melattur. He has played Prahlada as a seven year old in the most important play *Prahlada Charitam*. His arduous training in dance pays off today when he portrays the innocent Rukmini. "My family is dedicated to the Bhagavata Mela for the past four generations. We are not in this for any personal benefit. We know we have to remember that we are ordained to perpetuate this art."

Sri Herambanathan, the dance guru, trains all the dancers. "We are asking

for classical status for Bhagavata Mela. Each of our musicians is an established name in his/her profession. T. R. Navaneetham (flute) and Radhakrishna are 'A' grade artistes in the AIR. They have been with our troupe for thirty years now," says Guru Herambanathan.

Most of the dancers are trained to take on more than one role. They are initiated into the Natakam as a six or seven-year child to play Prahlada.

They then graduate to female leads and the heroes.

"We were a little disappointed at the meagre turnout at the Tata Theatre. Our attempts to organise at least one more programme were futile. We have been invited again next year. We hope we will get more encouragement from the large-hearted Bombay audience," says Rukmini alias Mali wistfully.

Indu Raman

## DRAMA — AN OPEN UNIVERSITY

In a paper, presented at the Pann Research Conference of the Tamil Isai Festival, Madras, on dramaturgy, the themes handled and the three 'As' of the art, Dr. Aru Alagappan, of the Department of Tamil, Annamalai University said:

Drama could be rightly called the mother of arts. Gandhiji's outlook underwent a total change after he had witnessed the Harischandra drama. In Tamil Nadu, three outstanding men who wrote dramas and took part in them later turned as Chief Ministers. The themes in ancient days had influenced the minds of the people so much that drama could be called an open university.

Drama found its first appearance in Egypt around 3000 B.C. Tracing its development in Tamil Nadu and the gradual waning of its growth, he said. T. K. Shanmugam introduced women as actors for the first time. There were several types of drama like 'Koothu', one-act plays and stage creations. Great writers included Sankaradas Swamikal, Viswanatha Das and Pammal Sambanda Mudaliar. The three essential constituents for a good play are the 'Author,' the 'Actor' and the 'Audience.'

During the British rule in India, there were some 250 authors who had produced 1,700 dramas. An Italian expert has said that the entire gamut of this art could be covered by only 36 main themes or plots.

## From Pata to Percussive Tradition

The young rasikas of today may not know about it. But those who are old will remember how fanatic the musicians of the past were about their Patas. The Patanthara discipline was looked upon as sacred and inviolable. Naturally, when a musician came across a version of a song which differed from his Pata, his blood rose in righteous anger. He accused the other artist of sacrilege (*abacharam*).

### INTERESTINGLY CONFUSING

The other musician, for his part, would not accept the claim of the accusing musician that his Pata was the right one. To him, the version was holy. It was the real and authentic Pata. It was the other musician who was guilty of "*abacharam*". Since many schools sprung round a composer like Tyagaraja, often three, four or more Patas of the same song gained currency. Each school claimed its version was the correct one. The other was wrong. And each school claimed lineage from a direct disciple of Tyagaraja.

The scene was confusing. It was interesting too. Though the Patas differed, each carried some fragment of the composer and his fragrance. This factor of some continuity with the original excellence was rendered possible because of the Pata's origin from a direct disciple. He had lived with the master. To the extent he was capable of, he had experienced the master. Some aspect that he could assimilate had entered him. All the Patas had some validity. None of them could be dismissed except when one was in a

totally different raga and had nothing to do with the composer's intentions.

One may wonder how the variations in the Patas of Tyagaraja compositions occurred. It can be asserted that they would certainly not have occurred had Tyagaraja assembled his disciples daily, asked them to sit around him and taught them the Pata. This method would have ensured Pata uniformity for posterity of his songs. But Tyagaraja was not a music teacher. He had attracted disciples not as a methodical music teacher but as an unpredictable saint-composer and as a musical messenger of God.

### 'STATEMENTS' OF SOUL

The disciples found the master's life a daily romance with Rama. Its emotional range was infinite. Though he did not teach, he was constantly inspiring them since he was constantly singing. And what he sang was tremendously new. His love and bhakti-laden heart flowed in a constant and matchless musical creativity. Compositions of priceless beauty were being born all the time. And Tyagaraja sang them with his entire being as statements of his soul.

These statements structured the songs in an infinite range as crystallised experiences of specific ragas. The music of Tyagaraja was ever on the move. The disciples could not precisely fix it because it was all propelled by the Bhakti dimension of a great spiritual master. All the artistry was a by-product of his Bhakti. But the disciples

could understand only by the artistic dimension. And in this understanding of the music, much of the disciples' entered it and got super-imposed on it in the notes they took.

### INFINITE ARTISTIC SCOPE

When Tyagaraja sang he was the song itself. When the disciple sang, it was his artistry. The responsibility was entirely that of the disciple. When Tyagaraja sang, each statement of the composition was made with his entire being. It was total. Hence it was tremendously direct. It was pregnantly simple. It was a simplicity which was superbly subtle and had a grandeur which compressed an infinite artistic scope. This was the scope which the disciples saw and exploited each according to the bias of his own talent.

This was the Sangati scope. And Tyagaraja compositions have become famous for the Sangati scope they afforded. The Sangati heritage came from the direct disciples of Tyagaraja. They contributed the Pata interpretations. In some, the Sangatis were less. In some, the Sangatis were more. Still, the varying Patas were informed by a logic in their Sangati-decorated structure. Their

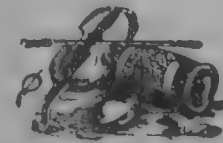
integrated look was the benediction received from the disciples' direct association with the great master. The Patas assumed the character in which the song and the decorative commentary were combined.

Today the Pata tradition has lost support and the Sangati psychology has got corrupted by a totally unwanted movement from musical experience to percussive effectiveness. Musicians liberally pack additive Akara Sangatis on their own to make the song an effective duet for voice and drum. This is the percussive path in which the success of the commercial cutcheri lies.

It is a situation in which this rasika frequently calls back to mind an experience provided by Papanasam Sivan. He once sang the Navarasakannada song *Ninnuvina* of Tyagaraja rendering it as a stark and powerful musical statement. Not a single Sangati figured in the song which all remember for the multiplicity of Sangatis mounted on it by professional musicians. Listening to Sivan, this rasika realised that only a great composer could understand a great composer.

NMN

— Courtesy : Excerpts from *The Hindu*



## Cultural Scene in Bombay

Though the cultural scene in Bombay was abuzz with activity, what with Sammelans, Mehfilis, Anniversary Celebrations and a few solos and ballets, the performances the writer could attend were few and far between. Nevertheless they were marked for certain novelties, vintage essence and efforts towards promotion of original art expressions.

Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Sabha, to begin with, had its October quota devoted to a fund-raising festival for the renovation of the Hall, at Bangalore, and the November programmes had an unusual combination of only Dance and Drama : a Bharata Natyam solo by Vani Ganapathy and two plays, "Akkarai-pachchai" and "Pengal Mirandal", enacted by the Mahalakshmi Theatre Group.

Opening the season's Pandal Cutcheris of the Sabha, in the Indian Gymkhana, Vani, a versatile disciple of Guru Kalyanasundaram of Sri Rajarajeswari Bharata Natya Kala Mandir, gave a vibrant performance with a touch of imagination. The combination of intricate Nritta in all its rhythmic complexities with the speed-factor liberally thrown into, a facet of Jugalbandhi involving Nattuvangam, Mridangam and footwork making its presence marked in this school and abhinaya with imaginative choreography, presented with a dramatic punch, made the dance presentation a veritable entertainment.

The ingenious master craftsman that he is, Guru Kalyanasundaram often clothes familiar number in new choreo-

graphy. With a peep into the saint-composer Purandara Dasa's instincts, he approached the much-danced number *Jagadoddharana* from a new angle. The focus was on the poet impressing upon Yasodha the fact, that, "the child Krishna was no ordinary babe to be tied up for restraining his mischief. The very same two little feet were the ones that measured the universe and humbled the mighty Mahabali" — the message was neatly conveyed through episodic dimension of abhinaya enhanced by the touching melodic backdrop provided by Vani's mother Indubala Ganapathy.

The rest of the numbers, the opening Ganesha Kavuthvam dovetailing into Tyagaraja's *Sri Ganapatini* (Saurashtram), a verse from Pasuram, the Huseni Swarajathi, the poignant Javali *Aliveni*, the Atana Tillana and the school's prized piece *Panchali Sabadam* added up to the overall entertainment.

It was an all-woman affair — the Tamil dramas, *Akkarai-pachchai* and *Pengal Mirandal*, enacted by the Mahalakshmi Theatre Group. Homely but dynamic, the Group comprises mostly housewives drawn to the medium with a purpose of exposing the ills of society, from day-to-day experiences in the lives of the middle class and educating the public on our social values and cultural heritage etc. No offence they mean. No sermonising tantrums, they make. They present the facts as they are — the human foibles and frustrations, the temptations and tension commonly gone through in many families. The two plays enacted in a way provoke the people to think — an eye-opener, one may say. *Akkarai-*

*pachchai* exposes the futilities of the 'phoren craze', while *Pengal Mirandal* is a retort to male chauvinism.

The all-female cast easily fitted into the various roles each played. No inhibitions in doing male roles, except when voices at places betrayed their sex. Simple settings and background music added to the realistic approach that the group has taken upon itself. It is with a purpose, a mission in mind the group has geared up under the director Gnanam Balasubramaniam who is the playwright, producer, director, the lead actress all rolled into one.

An interesting aside on the last day of the series was the felicitation accorded by the Sabha to the theatre veteran V. S. Raghavan of *Veda Vakku* fame.

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In this jet age when 'fast-food culture' has not left out even the performing arts, especially its presentation front, witnessing a Kathak performance of elegance and endurance was like relishing a vintage fare. As against the razzle-dazzle of dizzying speed and sizzling rhythmic which mark many of the Kathak recitals today, especially of youngsters, the Jaipur-Lucknow Gharana doyen Damayanthi Joshi's grace in Vilambit and sustenance in Sathvik spoke volumes of the scope this classical form has.

Bringing on to this art-form a balanced permutation of laya and bhava, Damayanthi has carved a niche for herself. Sathvik is the hallmark of her style, be it in the technique bound Nritta or pure expressional Abhinaya. She knows the value of silence, the pause, that helps pulsate the rhythm with greater impact. She knows how to employ her 'netra' (eyes) for incisive expressions. Her

'Chakkars' are swift but not virulent. They are touched up with certain softness, that render them so natural and elegant. Speed and frenzied crescendo are off her idiom. Instead there is a gradual build up of momentum! There is a Paddhati in her rendition, and her innovation has an inlaid grace.

In the 60-minute programme she gave for the Sur Singar Samsad's Haridas Sangeet Sammelan in December, there was the splendour of the Sathvik as against the spectacular wonderment that one is often treated to in Kathak presentations.

In the Tode, Tukre, Pharan, including the Chakkardar and Tatkar, tier upon tier the rhythmic intricacy rose up as the variety opened up. Her Misra pace variations to the Chatusra backdrop of melody (Lehra) and percussion (Tabla) was a fine piece of intricate artistry.

In the more relaxed abhinaya number, an Ashtapadi of Bindadin Maharaj, Damayanthi exuded the Bhakti bhava in its variegated emotions, touched up with the quintessence of humility. In which evocation, in seeking the Krupa of the Lord, music (the whole orchestra), the Ghunghuru, all joined in a Sathvik expressivity'. The impact of the pause-laden expressivity was an experience worth cherishing long.

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Kalavardhini Charitable Trust is an organisation founded for promoting performing and other fine arts. Among its multifarious objectives in the promotional activities encouraging young artistes to produce simple ballets and group presentations are noteworthy. More marked is its innovating stance to give a thrust to the choreographic skill of a budding dancer.

In collaboration with the Dadar-Matunga Cultural Centre, the Trust under the stewardship of Pandit Sharad Sathe has been organising for the past three years Bharata Natyam Dance Competition earmarked for choreography. This, in one way is a cultural talent search scheme and a more constructive and positive way of assessment at that. The competition comprises an elimination and final rounds. In the elimination round, candidates' overall performing skill and presentational acumen with a special emphasis on technical aspects on Nritta and Abhinaya are evaluated. For the finals it is their originality and application that is evaluated. Those selected are given an hour before a prerecorded cassette comprising a passage of Nritta, Abhinaya score for choreographing and to be presented in a 15-20 minute slot. Music for presentation is provided live so as to afford the dancers scope and freedom to improvise their Sanchari Bhavas without any constraints.

It was quite an interesting experience to witness young dancers putting in an effort giving expression to their imagination and intelligence. In a way one could gauge their innate talent, their understanding, application and assimilation of the artform; whether they were mute 'reproducing machines' or aspirants with an urge for self-expression; how much of the 'tradition' they have imbibed; what 'modernised' leanings they were prone to and how far these could be absorbed into the dance-stream.

A commendable feature was the sincere efforts put in by candidates in creative choreography but what was disconcerting was that hardly a dozen participants came forward to compete in a populous city that boasts of overflowing cultural talents!

In the Dikshitar Day Celebrations of the Sabha, in November, 1992, some outstanding artistes of the city paid their musical Anjali to the Savant, along with the budding talents who hold promise for the future of high quality classical music.

Sarayu Srinivasan, whose melodious music is channeled more onto the dance circuit, came out with her evocative rendition of compositions, like *Ekamresanayike* (Suddhasaveri), *Ekamranatham* (Purvikalyani) and *Dharmasamvardhani* (Madyamavathi). Accompanying her was her son Anand Srinivasan who showed his prowess on the violin. Kumar-Pramod combine on Mridangam and Ghatam gave a rightful percussion support.

Rama Krishnaswamy, a vocalist of mark, belonging to the "Sishya-Parampara" of Rajamanickam Pillai, dueted with her daughter Asha, paying homage with some rare kritis like *Pavanthpate* (Natai), *Sri Parthasarathi* (Suddha Dhan-yasi) besides the popular *Anandamritakarshini* (Amrutavarshini). The young veteran Chidambaran gave a five rhythmic support to the spirited music.

S. V. Ramachandran, senior Violin Vidwan, in his solo played *Kunjanti* (Gur-jari), *Balagopala* (Bhairavi) and *Akilandeswari* (Dwijavanti). His is a style known for sweet melody and soft bowing. He was accompanied by Mohan Krishnamoorthy, a young talent — on the Mridangam.

Among the young vocalists, Sheela and Vidya Balasubramanyam acquitted themselves creditably.

The Anjali concluded with a performance by the Sabha Veena Quartet.

## RAGA AND RASA ★

By  
GOVINDA S. TEMBE

Ragas are the distinguishing and fascinating feature of our music, whether North Indian or South Indian, Punjabi or Bengali, light or classical.

The structure of ragas is based on the various combinations of the seven notes, including the two invariables, shadja and panchama, and the five variables, namely, rishabha, gandhara, madhyama, dhaivata and nishada, each divided into its flat (*Komala*) and sharp (*Tivra*) positions. The permutations and combinations of these twelve notes, if worked out according to mathematical calculations, have a potentiality of producing about 35,000 ragas. But only about 150 to 200 ragas are extant in actual practice. The reason for the limited number of ragas is that only those combinations of notes which are delightful, musical in sound and capable of creating an artistic air have been recognised as ragas. In fact, delightfulness has been considered the supremely essential characteristic of raga structure. Raga has been defined by the ancient Indian masters of music as *Ranjayati iti Ragah* "that which gives delight."

In the fields of music, drama and poetry, the capability for delightfulness and the capability for aesthetic emotion are the two essential qualities. It means that the source of aesthetic sentiment or rasa is also the source of delightfulness or raga. Thus the vital interrelation between raga and rasa was established and also experienced. The notes which are capable of innate harmony with each other are consider-

ed as musical notes. They have a latent power to produce musical patterns and the quality of delightfulness. In the exposition of a raga this latent power is experienced in the form of musical unity. Because the notes possess the latent power of producing aesthetic emotion, it automatically follows that ragas, which are coherent combinations of such notes, must produce aesthetic sentiment or rasa. Hence, the interrelation between raga and rasa is based on the notes only. It is not based on rhythm (*Laya*), poetry or dramatic element, and a classical melodious composition in a raga does not require these basically. They are mere aids and not essentials. In fact, the integral aesthetic sentiment is produced only by the specific patterns of notes of the raga.

### TECHNIQUE VIS-A-VIS RASA

'What is the nature of the rasa or the aesthetic emotion produced by a raga?' The word rasa reminds us of the nine rasas in poetry and drama. It is to be seen whether all these rasas, adhering to their scientific definitions and rules, can be produced by different ragas and raginis.

In the present circumstances, no musician seems to be aware of the fact that raga has any relation with rasa. The contemporary concept of singing emphasises technique rather than art. Consequently, embellishments like *meenda*, *gamaka*, *tan*, *khatka*, etc., are handled indiscriminately. No musician cares to use only those embellishments which would help the unfolding of the

\*Paper presented at AIR Music symposium



innate emotion of the raga. Unscrupulous use of embellishments and extravagant flourishes of tans are regarded as essentials of classical singing. Where, then, is room for *rasa*? The upward and downward orders of notes (*aroha-avaroha*) are correct; the voice is trained to modulate all the supple and delicate designs (*lakab* and *harkat*) of the various schools like Gwalior, Agra, Punjab, Banaras, etc., — this is all that is supposed to be required for classical singing of a high order. Moreover, the poetic content of the song is often inconsistent with the emotion of the raga in which the song (*cheez*) is sung. The guttural interjections of the singer, his bodily jerks and jumps, the two-beat and three-beat (*duyya* and *tiyya*) pieces of rhythm add to this bewilderment. No wonder that *rasa* which is the soul of raga should be lost in a terrible maze. Indeed, such music invariably produces *rasas*, but they are *Raudra* (fury), *Bhayanaka* (terror) and *Hasya* (laughter).

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF NOTES

It is a common experience that every raga manifests shades of different *rasas*. It should, therefore, be first examined as to what is the temperament of each note and what emotions it reflects. During the last many years I have listened to several vocalists and instrumentalists. My own experience of the various emotional hues and shades in their beautiful displays, fortunately, concurs with that of a few other writers on the subject.

First comes the *Shadja*. It is on the basis of this note that the locations and values of other notes are determined.

Nay, it is from this basic note that the other notes vibrate forth. That is why it is called *Shadja*, i.e., the source of the six. This note is in the eternal state of changelessness and immobility. Like a yogi in his yogic trance, it lives beyond any attachment.

The next note is flat *Rishabha*. It is as though it is half awakened to consciousness, but rather sluggish on account of the break in sleep, morose and sad.

The third note, sharp *Rishabha*, indicates a state of perfect wakefulness, but perhaps on account of being awakened against its will, it is rather inclined to *Shadja* and reminds one of the indolence of a person yawning after opening the eyes.

Then comes the flat *Gandhara*, bewildered, helpless and hence in a pitiable mood. However, it is as charming as a beautiful woman in a depressed state of mind.

The next note is sharp *Gandhara*. It is very inquisitive and alert. Like a smart child, it goes on asking, 'Why? When? Where? Who?' It bears a cheerful, sportive disposition. It keeps the atmosphere fresh and pleasant.

Then follows flat *Madhyama*. It is very grave, noble and powerful. Given an opportunity, it dominates the others and pervades the whole atmosphere.

Next is sharp *Madhyama*, very sensitive, fickle, luxurious but displaying base desires. Being very mischievous, it does not lose an opportunity to tease its neighbour *Panchama*, to whom it is mysteriously drawn.

The adjoining *Panchama* is very brilliant, self-composed, unaffected and jolly. It is as it were the better half of *Shadja*. It always lives in perfect harmony with *Shadja*, illuminating the house of the seven notes and providing refuge to all. It possesses great beauty, and a dignified smile like a well-bred lady.

Flat *Dhaivata* comes next, which displays extreme grief and pathos. Then comes sharp *Dhaivata*. Its temperament is similar to that of a muscular and robust athlete. Its behaviour betrays a lack of civilised manners, almost bordering on lustfulness.

The next note, flat *Nishada*, is gentle, happy and affectionate, although a little pathetic. However, it sometimes wears a hard countenance. Being friendly to all, it mixes various emotions, such as erotic, heroic, pathetic and joyous.

The position of the next note, sharp *Nishada*, is the last but one in the house of the seven. It has a piercing appeal like the sharp blade of a spear. It sounds like crying pathetically in acute agony. It makes the audience uneasy with intense longing for *Shadja*.

And finally comes the upper *Shadja*. Its vibrational strength is double that of the basic *Shadja* with which it is in complete unison. It is the identical echo of the latter and the climax of the sentiment of raga. At this point, the essence of the raga oozes out and the audience has the full satisfaction of enjoying the raga in its entirety.

#### EXISTENCE 'RASA'

Once these temperamental characteristics or emotional potentialities of the notes are recognised, it naturally follows that these emotional contents of the notes used in a particular raga roughly constitute its sentiment which in turn prevails upon each individual

note during the exposition of the raga. The emotional tenor of a raga is thus predetermined by its notes. But it must be remembered that this emotional tenor is of a gross nature only, because a note, whatever its temperament, changes its emotional content according to its association with other notes and also when it is accentuated by the elimination of a near-by note. For instance, take the two patterns *pa ma ga ri* and *pa ga ri*. In the former, *ga* denotes tenderness, while in the latter, being accentuated by the elimination of *ma*, it assumes a heroic bearing. Similarly, the emotional content of a note is toned down when it is oscillating. Some of our ragas also require the intervening sub-notes of *Shrutis* which affect the basic temperament of the notes. On account of these alterations, various finer shades of the predominant sentiment of ragas belonging to the same group or consisting of the same notes could be displayed, and thus a specific shade of sentiment could be ascribed to each individual raga. But we need not enter the deep waters.

#### 'RASAS' IN MUSIC

It is a matter of common experience that some of the ragas produce in us a feeling of pity, some make us grave and still others cheer us. The words of the song have no share in the creation of these feelings. Similarly, no one has ever evidenced that a particular pattern of notes has imparted a pathetic feeling to one listener and a cheerful feeling to the other. This uniformity of experience refutes the charge that the aesthetic sentiment in music is subjective and hence varies with the musician or the listener. It induces the conclusion that the sentiment of a raga exists independently of the musician or the audience.

With regard to their effect, the ragas can be divided into two basic categories.

ries — exhilarative and depressive. The four sentiments of erotic, heroic, comic and beautiful can be included in the former category, while the remaining five, namely, pathetic, terrible, furious, repulsive and amazing, fall in the latter. The art of music is not based, like other arts, on events or scenes from social life or Nature. Therefore, its only function is excitement and exaltation of emotions in a very subtle way. Hence, there is no place in our ragas for the provocative sentiments of laughter, fury, terror, odium or dismay. Indeed, provocative sentiments can be produced by composing discordant patterns of notes jarring to the ears.

For these reasons, our Ragas manifest only four sentiments, namely, pathetic, beautiful, erotic and heroic. This manifestation also is done with restraint and fine taste. It never takes any extreme form of naked romance, violent heroism, yelling cries or the silence of the grave.

#### 'RAGAS' ACCORDING TO 'RASAS'

The late Shri V. N. Bhatkhande classified the extant ragas in the three basic categories — (1) those taking sharp Rishabha, sharp Gandhara and sharp Nishada; (2) those taking flat Rishabha, sharp Gandhara and flat Dhaivata; and (3) those taking flat Gandhara and flat Nishada. This classification is very significant. If these three categories could be related to the three sentiments of erotic, pathetic and heroic, it would have been a perfect classification. But the leading (*Vadi*) note of individual raga is different even within the same group of ragas taking similar notes, and hence the emotion of each individual raga undergoes a slight change. The above classification, therefore, has little use from the point of view of ragas. The only satisfactory way to

determine the sentiment of a raga, is, therefore, to base it on the leading (*Vadi*) note of the raga. It must be conceded that in spite of the leading note, the different associations of sub-leading (*Samvadi*), concordant (*Anuvadi*) and discordant (*Vivadi*) notes make a change in the predominant sentiment. However, it can be safely said that the ragas in which flat Madhyama generally plays a free and dominating role impart an element of serenity and sublimity to the raga; for instance, Malkauns, Lalit, Kedar, Bageshri and Durga. Out of these, Bageshri is tinged with pathos on account of its having a sharp Dhaivata and flat Nishada.

The ragas which are dominated by Panchama are invigorating and hence conducive to erotic sentiment. Sharp Gandhara also produces the same effect though in a lesser degree. Ragas with flat Dhaivata evoke the sentiment of pathos, and if they have flat Rishabha or flat Gandhara to help the flat Dhaivata, the pathetic sentiment is intensified. The only exception to this rule is Raga Bhairav.

Thus, the emotional content of the ragas can be determined on the basis of the synthetic effect of the leading, sub-leading, concordant and discordant notes, and they can be correlated with the four main sentiments of eroticism, heroism, pathos and beatitude. It can be realised only when the experts of classical music come together and make a minute study from this angle. The co-ordination of Ragas and Rasas is the chief peculiarity of Indian music. The very object of the exposition of ragas is the creation of aesthetic sentiments (*Rasa-siddhi*). Embellishments like Tans, Gamakas, etc., should be used only at the right places for bringing out the Rasa, and not for displaying vocal acrobatics.

## MINI INDIA

*Idu Engal Bombai*, By CHEMBURAAN. Sivapriya Publications, New Bombay.  
Pages : 304 Price : Rs. 45.

**V**asudaiva Kutumbakam". That is how the book *Idu Engal Bombai* in Tamil by S. B. Subramaniam describes Bombay, the commercial metropolis that has flourished over the centuries on the philosophy of 'live and let live'. A cosmopolitan city its strength has been in its contrasts, be it in religion, in socio-cultural traditions or in the professions of its citizens. The author who writes under the pseudonym Chemburaan is a prolific writer and a staunch follower of poet Subramania Bharati. Having taken premature voluntary retirement from the services of the Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilisers Ltd., Chemburaan devotes his time to literary creations which is a passion with him. The book on Bombay is the result of hard work collecting material from various sources, original and secondary, interviewing important personalities and day to day close observations. The author has to his credit another publication, *Vidiyai Venra Paadam* based on the real life story of the Jaipur-footed danseuse Sudha Chandran.

The book may be classed as one of the outstanding and enlightening travelogues. It is also in other terms a useful handbook, a veritable chronicle and a popular guide to those coming to Bombay either for sight seeing or on a job-hunt. And written in workaday Tamil it adds to be of immense use as a worthy friend.

Besides these, it is a piece of literature woven around Bombay in general with an inlay work of the Tamils and their socio-cultural integration into the cosmopolitan stream adding a new dimension, a new sheen to the national unity.

It has a personal touch, a perspective to serve. Right from the history of the seven islands that went to make Bombay, the various interpretations to its christening down to the mundane details of lifestyle of the original inhabitants, the Kolis the book is exhaustively descriptive. While its main purport is to introduce Bombay (he calls it a mini-India) in all its splendour and squalor to the Southerners, especially Tamilians who form the bulk of this population, it does not neglect other linguistic groups inhabiting the metropolis, detailing their lifestyles, the cultural ethos, their religious leanings, their festivals wherein there is a 'Sarvajanic' spirit of celebrations.

Temples, Festivals, Cultural Organizations, Educational Institutions — all are gone through with an in-depth perspective. There is of course a whole section devoted to the Tamil culture in the metropolis and the many faceted contributions of the Tamilians to its development.

There is a flourish, a fluency in the simple lucid style of the language. No

hassles of high flown Tamil, yet, it exudes a literary aroma that even a layman can relish. It combines information, education and enlightenment on every aspect that the author touches upon. A few of the chapters are compilations of the author's earlier write-ups on Bombay in various journals.

Whilst painting a picturesque panorama of this cosmopolitan city, the author does not fail to sound a note of caution to job-seekers who perennially stream into the city. 'Keep your eyes and ears open before stepping into this commercial paradise,' he seems to caution. There are as many pitfalls and dangers as there are openings and opportunities and once one falls a victim none would come to his rescue. So aloof and non-interfering the people are; which has its own advantages and disadvantages, the author analyses.

His personal perception of Bombay is such that he does not envisage this city looking up to the Centre for any assistance or grant but stand on its own.

The cross section of the persons interviewed in this connection makes interesting reading.

The chapter entitled "Fifty Years Hence" is a thoughtful inclusion. What would be the place of Tamil among Bombay Tamilians who are very much a part of this cosmopolitan culture? Would the mother tongue, the Tamil culture, the tradition, survive? The discussions conducted among various age-groups, officials, scholars and students form an intelligent finale to the book and contains useful suggestions to meet this fear psychosis.

The release of this 304-page literary work this year could not have been more timely. It comes as a grim reminder to all of us that Bombay which has been built brick by brick by the efforts of all its citizens must return to its cosmopolitan status soon by coming out of the present tragic mayhem.

S.R.

Courtesy : Free Press Journal



## இசைக் கலையும் வீணையும்

(சென்னை சங்கீத வித்வத் சபையின் 66-வது மகாநாட்டில் வீணை வித்வான் தஞ்சாவூர் கே.பி. சிவானந்தம் அவர்களின் தலைமை உரையிலிருந்து)

வித்வத் சபையின் 66 வது ஆண்டு விழாவிருந்த கலையுலகம் தாழ்ந்த கொடுக்கும் பொறுப்பு இச்சிறியேனுக்கு கொடுக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது எனக்கு மகாவித்வான்கள் பலர் இருந்து நடத்தித் தந்துள்ள திருக்கலைப் பெரிய மீது சுமத்தி இருக்கும் இச்சபையின் நிர்வாகத்தினர், என ஆண்டிருந்த உரிய சங்கீத கலாநிதிகள், சங்கீத வித்வான்கள் வித்வான்கள் நமஸ்காரத்தைப் பணிவன்புடன் தெரிவித்துக் கொள்கிறேன்.

இத்துடன், எனது தாய், தந்தையையும் சங்கீத மகாநாட்டில் சேவை புரிந்த என் முன்னோர்களையும் திருக்கலையை என் கருவியாக நாதர்களாகிய வித்வான்கள் தேசமங்கலம் சப்டிராமலிபு நாடு நாடு பந்தணைநல்லூர் மீனாட்சி சுந்தரம் பிள்ளை ஆகிய மூவரையும் மிகப் பரிசு இத்தருணத்தில் வணங்குகிறேன்.

இப்பிறவியில் எனக்கு இத்தகையதொரு வாய்ப்பு காலதெய்வமான தஞ்சை பிருஹதிஸ்வரம் பிந்தரத்தாக்கி நமஸ்காரம் பாதங்களை என் மனத்தால் தியானித்து பூஜித்து, இப்பெரிய பொறுப்பினை ஏற்றுக்கொள்கிறேன். எனக்கு அளித்த இந்த வாய்ப்பினை எங்கள் பண்புள்ள தஞ்சை சின்னையா, பெருமையா, சிவானந்தம் வடவிலுந்து கலாநிதிகள் குருவுமான ஸ்ரீ முத்துஸ்வாமி தீர்த்தர் அவர்களுக்கு நமஸ்காரம் கருதுகிறேன்.

### ஸங்கீத பாரம்பரியம்

இந்த சங்கீத வித்வத் சபை மகாநாட்டை என் தந்தை சங்கீத கலாநிதி க.பொன்னையா பிள்ளை அவர்கள் 1933, மார்ச்சு மாதம் தாது திருக்கலையுலகம் ஆண்டுகள் பின்னர், அவரது மகனாகிய எனக்கு இவ்வாய்ப்பைத் தலை சங்கீத வித்வான் குடும்பத்தாரின் சார்பில் மீண்டும் நன்றியுடன் பெற்றுக் கொடுத்தார்கள்.

இசைக் கலையை இறைவன் பார்வையிக்கு உட்படுத்தி உலகம் மலர்ந்த வழுங்கினார். இறைவன் நாத வடிவமாகத் திருக்கலையை, எதிர்விசையாக இறைவன் விளங்குகிறான் என்று தேவார ஆநிரியாடல்களில் பாரம்பரிய கலை வடிவம் இறைவனும், இறைவனின் அருள் வெளிப்பாடும் உலக கலையாக விளங்குகின்றன.

அக்கலைஞன், இசைக் கலையும் ஒன்று. சங்கீதம் 'சாமவேத'த்திலிருந்து தோன்றியது. இசைக்கு இசையாதார் யாருமில்லை. காட்டில் வாழும் கொடிய விலங்குகள் கூட இசைக்குக் கட்டுப்பட்டதை இலக்கியங்கள் கூறுகின்றன.

நாரதரால் இயற்றப்பட்ட "நாரத சிதை" என்ற நூலும், பரதரின் "நாட்டிய சாஸ்திர"மும், தத்திலரின் "தத்திலம்" என்ற நூலும், மதங்கரின் "பிருஹத்தேவி" யும், பார்ச்வ தேவரின் "சங்கீத சமயசாரமும்", சார்ங்க தேவரின் "சங்கீத ரத்னாகர"மும், தாமோதரரின் "சங்கீத தர்பண"மும், புண்டரீக விட்டலரின் "ஸத்ராக சந்திரோதயமும்" சோமநாதரின் "ராக விபோத"மும், அஹோபிலரின் "சங்கீத பாரிஜாத"மும், ராம அமாத்தியரின் "ஸ்வரமேளகலாநிதி"யும், ரகுநாத நாயக்கரின் மந்திரி, கோவிந்த தீக்ஷிதரின், "சங்கீத ஸுதா"வும், வேங்கடமகியின், "சதுர்தண்மபரகாசிகை"யும், கோவிந்தசாரியாரின் "ஸ்வகிரஹ சூடாமணி"யும், துளஜா மகாராஜாவின் "சங்கீத சாராமருத"மும் நமது சங்கீத பாரம்பரியத்தை வெளிப்படுத்தும் ஒப்பற்ற நூல்களாக விளங்கி வருகின்றன.

### லயஸ்வர சேர்க்கையின் மகிமை

நமது நாட்டில் வழங்கி வரும் சங்கீதத்தைக் "கர்நாடக சங்கீதம்" என்று கூறுகிறோம். கர்நாடக சங்கீதத்தில் ராகங்களுக்கு முக்கியமான இடமுண்டு. இந்த ராகங்களை நமது முன்னோர்கள் 'மார்க்கம்' என்றும் 'தேடி' என்றும் பாகுபடுத்தினர். ராகம் பாடும் பொழுது தான் வித்வானின் மனோதர்மம் பிரகாசிக்கிறது. பாடுவோரின் ஆற்றலால் ராகங்கள் மேன்மேலும் மெருகேற்றப்பட்டு, அது அடுத்த தலைமுறையினருக்குக் குருகுல வாசம் மூலம் முறையாகக் கற்பிக்கப்படுகிறது. இந்த ராகங்கள் வெகுவாகக் கையாளப்பட்டு, மக்களுக்குப் புரியுமாறு வளர்ச்சி பெற்றிருப்பதால், அவற்றை எவ்வளவு பாடினாலும், பாடுவோர்க்கும், கேட்போருக்கும் திகட்டாமல் இனிக்கின்றன. ஒரே கீர்த்தனையை எத்தனை முறை பாடினாலும், ஒவ்வொரு முறையிலும் ஒரு புதிய அனுபவம் கிடைக்கிறது. சங்கீத சமுத்திரத்தில் நாம் கொஞ்சம் தான் முகந்து கொண்டு வந்துள்ளோம் என்றும் நமக்குப் புரியாத ஒரு பெரிய சங்கீத உலகம் இருக்கிறது என்றும் உணர்கின்றோம்.

லயமும், ஸ்வரமும் சேர்ந்து நம்மை புதிய உலகிற்கே அழைத்துச் செல்வதை அறிகிறோம். நாதத்தின் நுணுக்கங்களையும், ரஞ்சனம் உண்டாக்கும் வழிமுறைகளையும், ரச பாவங்களை ராகத்தில் அமைக்கும் நெறிகளையும், ரச பாவத்தோடு பாடும் ராகச் சாயல்களையும், ஒழுக்கமான முறையில் ராகங்களை அமைக்கும் முறைகளையும், கிருதிகளை லயக்கட்டுக் கோப்புடன் பாடும் முறைகளையும், நம் முன்னோர்கள் வகுத்துள்ளனர். இந்த ராகங்கள் சரியான முறையில் ஒழுங்குபடுத்தப்பட்டு, அமைக்கப்பட்டுள்ள காரணத்தால் இவை, தலைமுறை, தலைமுறைகளாக வாழ்ந்து வருகின்றன. நமது சங்கீதத்தில் ராகதாள அமைப்புகளைக் கண்டு அயல் நாட்டவரும் வியக்கின்றனர். இப்படிச் சிறப்படைந்திருக்கும் ராகங்களில் குறிப்பாக, தோடி, பைரவி, காமபோதி, கல்யாணி, சங்கராபரணம் போன்றவை இன்றும் நம் வித்வான்கள் அமைப்பு நிலை குறையாமல் பாடி வருவதைத் காண்கிறோம். இவர்கள் ஒவ்வொருவரும் தங்களுக்கே உரித்தான பாணியில் பாடி

வருகின்றனர். இதில் யாருடைய பாணி உயர்ந்தது என்ற சர்ச்சை தேவையில்லை. அவரவர் சாரீரத்தில் பேசுகிற இயற்கையான மனோதர்மப்படி ஒவ்வொரு பாணியும் விளங்குகிறது.

இலக்கிய நிலையில் இசைக்கலையை வெளிப்படுத்தும் இசை வடிவங்களை 'உருப்படிகள்' என்று கூறுவர். தேவார ஆசிரியர்களான திருஞான சம்பந்தர், திருநாவுக்கரசர், சுந்தரமூர்த்தி சுவாமிகள் பாடிய அற்புதமான இசைப்பாடல்களைக் கண்டு உலகமே வியக்கிறது. இப்பாடல்களைக் கோவில் தோறும் பாட ஏற்பாடு செய்த தஞ்சை அரசர் ராஜராஜனையும், இவற்றை வெளிக் கொணரப்பாடப்பட்ட நம்பியாண்டார் நம்பி அவர்களையும், சங்கீத உலகம் என்மென்றும் நினைவு கூறும். ஜயதேவர், தாளன்பாக்கம் அன்மமாசாரியார், புரந்தரதாஸர், அருணகிரிநாதர், நாராயண தீர்த்தர், கேசுத்ரக்ரூர், பத்ராசலம் ராமதாஸர், முத்துத்தாண்டவர், மாரிமுத்தாப்பிள்ளை, அருணாசலக் கவிராயர், சியாமா சாஸ்திரி, தியாகராஜர், முத்துஸ்வாமி தீக்ஷிதர், கோபாலகிருஷ்ண பாரதி, ஸ்வாதித் திருநாள், சுப்பராய சாஸ்திரி, வீணை குப்பையர், மைசூர் ஸ்தாதிவராவ், பல்லவி சேஷம்யர், எம் முன்னோர்களான சின்னையா, பொன்னையா, சிவானந்தம், வடிவேலு போன்றவர்கள், அந்தந்தக்காலங்களுக்கு ஏற்ற வகையில் உருப்படிகள் பலவற்றைப் படைத்து கர்நாடக இசை உலகிற்கு வளம் தேடித்தந்துள்ளனர்.

பக்தியால் சங்கீதம் தோன்றியது. சங்கீதத்தால் பக்தி மேன்மேலும் வளர்கிறது. சங்கீத பரதக் கலைகளைப் பயில இறைவன் அருள் தேவை. நாத ரூபமான இறைவனை நாதோபாசனையால் பூஜிக்கும் முறையை நம் முன்னோர்கள் வகுத்துள்ளனர். சங்கீதம் நமது மனத்தை பரிசுத்தப்படுகிறது. ஒருமைப்படுத்துகிறது. மனம் ஒருமைப்படுவதின் மூலம், நாம் நம் ஆன்மாவை உணர்கிறோம். ஆன்மாவிற்குள் ஜோதி ரூபமாக விளங்கும் ஆண்டவனையும் உணர்கிறோம். ஆண்டவரின் திருவருளில் நம்மை நாம் ஒன்று படுத்திக் கொள்கிறோம். இதனைப் பெரியவர்களின் வரலாறுகள் மூலம் நாம் அறிகிறோம். இக்கலைகளை பண்டைக்காலத்திலிருந்தே பெரும்பாலும் அரசர்களும், கோவில்களும் தான் வளர்த்தும், காப்பாற்றியும் வந்துள்ளனர்.

### குருகுலம்

இந்த சங்கீத மரபை பரம ஞானம் படைத்த குரு உபதேசத்தால்தான் பெறமுடியும். குருகுல வாசத்தின் மூலம் தான் இந்தக் கலையை முழுமையாகக் கற்க முடியும், எம் முன்னோர்களான தஞ்சை நால்வருக்கும் ஸ்ரீ முத்து ஸ்வாமி தீக்ஷிதர் அவர்களே குருவாக அமைந்தது, எங்கள் பரம்பரை செய்த புண்ணியமே. எம் முன்னோர்கள் "நவரத்ன மாலா" என்ற ஒன்பது கீர்த்தனைகளையும், அவற்றில் தங்கள் குருநாதரைப் போலவே 'குருகுல' என்ற முத்திரையுடன் ஸ்வாமியையும், அம்பாளையும் தொடர்பு படுத்தியும் குருகுலதாஸர், குருகுலபக்த என்று துதித்தும் பாடியும் உள்ளனர்.

இக்கலையை புத்தகங்களை மட்டுமே நம்பிக் கற்க முடியாது. குருகுல வாசத்தின் போது குருவுடன் இருந்து, குருவின் மனோதர்மத்திற்கு ஏற்றவாறு கற்கவேண்டும். குருவுடன் தங்கியிருக்கையில், சங்கீதத்தைக் கற்றுக் கொள்வதோடு வாழ்க்கை நெறிகளையும் கற்றுக்கொள்ள வாழ்ப்பு ஏற்படுகிறது. சங்கீதம் என்பது பேச்சிலும்,

எழுத்திலும் மட்டும் அடங்குவதல்ல. தந்தமயம் சங்கீத உலகில் பிரபலமடைந்துள்ள எழுத்திலும் மட்டும் அடங்குவதல்ல. தந்தமயம் சங்கீத உலகில் பிரபலமடைந்துள்ள வித்வான்கள், குருகுல முறையில் சங்கீதத்தைக் கற்றவர்களே. சங்கீத லக்ஷணத்திற்குத் தாளிக்கட 'பங்கம்' இல்லாமல் தன்னுடைய சாரீர தர்மத்திற்கு உதவுமாறு லலிதமான பாணியை அமைத்துக் கொண்டு பாடுவதுதான் சரியான மாரக்கமாகும்.

பட்டப்படிப்பிற்குப் பள்ளியில் 12 வருடங்களும், கல்லூரியில் மூன்று வருடங்களும் படித்த பின்பு தான் பட்டதாரியாக முடிகிறது. அதைப்போலவே, சங்கீதக்கலையைப் பயில குறைந்தது 10 வருடங்களாவது ஒரே குருவினிடத்தில் பயின்று, மேலும் சில வருடங்களாவது வித்வான்களின் கச்சேரிகளை இடைவிடாமல் கேட்டு அவற்றிலுள்ள கிறந்த அம்சங்களைத் தனதாக்கிக் கொள்ள முடியும். பயிற்சிக் காலங்களில் அதிகாலையில் தினமும் இரண்டு மணி நேரமாவது அப்யாசம் செய்ய வேண்டியது மிகவும் முக்கியம்.

### பள்ளி பயிற்சி முழுமை அடைய ....

தற்காலத்தில் பல்வேறு கல்வி நிறுவனங்களின் மூலம் சங்கீதம் கற்பிக்கப்படுகிறது. இப்படிப்பட்ட பயிற்சியில் முழுமை இல்லை. சங்கீத நிறைவு பெறாமலேயே, சங்கீதப் பயிற்சி பெற்று வெளியேறுகிறார்கள். சங்கீதக் கல்வி நிறுவனங்களில் சங்கீத ஆசிரியர் நியமன விஷயத்தில் சட்டதிட்டங்களை மட்டும் திட்டவாட்டமாக செயல்படுத்துகின்றனர். சங்கீதம், சட்ட திட்டங்களுக்கு மட்டுமே உட்பட்டதல்ல. சங்கீதத் தகுதி வாய்ந்த, வயது முதிர்ந்த வித்வான்களை ஆசிரியர்களாக அமர்த்தி, கல்லூரியை நடத்தினால் தான், கலை முழுமையாக வளர்ச்சியடைய முடியும். அந்த நிறுவனங்களும் பெருமையடையும். அரசு நிறுவனங்களும், தனியார் ஸ்தாபனங்களும் இதை உறுதியாகச் செயல்படுத்தினால்தான் பிற்காலத்தில் பற்பல வித்வான்கள் தோன்ற வாய்ப்பு ஏற்படும் என்பது சங்கீதத் துறையில் எனது 50 ஆண்டு கால அனுபவத்தின் மேல் கண்ட உண்மை என்பதையும் இந்த சந்தர்ப்பத்தில் பணிவுடன் விக்கோபித்துக் கொள்ள விரும்புகிறேன்.

நானும் ஒரு சிறிய அளவிற்கு 'வீணை' பயின்று வாசித்து வருகிறேன். இந்த உயர்மிகு வாத்தியத்தின் பெருமையையும், வாசிக்கும் முறைகளையும், இந்த வித்வத் சபையில் 1979 ல் நடந்த மகாநாட்டிற்கு தலைமை தாங்கி 'சங்கீத கலாநிதி' விருது பெற்ற எஸ் சகோதரர் வீணை வித்வான் கே. எஸ். நாராயண ஸ்வாமி ஐயர் அவர்கள் வெகு அழகாகத் தமது தலைமை உரையில் எடுத்துக் கூறியுள்ளார். இருப்பினும் என் முறையிலும் சில வார்த்தைகள் கூற விரும்புகிறேன்.

தெய்வீக வாத்தியமான வீணையின் உயர்வைப் பற்றி வேதங்கள் கோஷிப்பதாக, வேத அத்தியானம் செய்த மகா பண்டிதர்கள் கூறக்கேட்டிருக்கிறேன். வீணை முதலில் எந்த உருவிலிருந்தது, இப்பொழுது அமைந்திருக்கும் உரு எக்காலத்தில் யாரால் அமைக்கப் பெற்றது என்பவையெல்லாம் ஆராய்ச்சிக்குரிய விஷயங்கள். இன்று கையாளும் வீணையின் அமைப்பை நாம் அறிகிறோம். இதன் தெய்வீகமான நாடத்தையும் அனுபவித்து மகிழ்கிறோம்.

முதன் முதலில் வீணையை அப்யாசம் பண்ணும் போதே, நமது கர்நாடக சங்கீத முறையில் அமைந்துள்ள ரக்தி ராகங்களின் ஸ்வரூபமும், பாவமும், வீணையில் அமைந்துள்ள 12 ஸ்வரஸ்தான மெட்டுக்களிலிருந்து மட்டுமே த்வனிக்காது என்ற

உண்மையை இந்த வாத்தியம் நிரூபித்துக் காட்டுகின்றது. ஒவ்வொரு ராகமும் பாவ பூர்த்தியுடன் த்வனிப்பதற்கு, ஸ்வரங்களை ஏற்றத் தாழ்படனும், வளைவு குழைவுகளுடனும், எந்த அளவில் வாசிக்கவேண்டும் என்பதை இந்த வாத்தியமே அதை முறையாக ஆராதிப்பவர்களுக்குச் சிறந்த குரு நாதரைப் போல் போதிக்கின்றது.

"கோனுகதம் வாத்தியம்" என்ற முறைதான் நமது ஸங்கீத பத்தியில் கையாளப்பட்டு வருகின்றது. வைணிகர்களையும், பாடகர்களையும் புகழும் போது வீணைக்கு உவமையாகப் பாட்டையும், பாட்டிற்கு உவமையாக வீணையையும் காட்டிப் புகழ்வதுண்டு. பாட்டும் வீணையும் ஒன்றிற்கு ஒன்று துணையாகவே அமைந்துள்ளன. பாடகர்கள் வீணையைப் ஓரளவு அப்யாசம் செய்ய வேண்டுமென்பதை ஸ்ரீ முத்துஸ்வாமி தீக்ஷிதர் அவர்களும் அவருடைய முன்னோர்களும் நிரூபித்திருக்கிறார்கள்.

ஸங்கீதம் இனிமையையும் ஸௌக்யத்தையும் அடிப்படையாகக் கொண்டது. வீணை இவற்றின் கிரமம். லோகமாதாவான அம்பாளுக்குப் பூஜை செய்து புஷ்பங்களால் அர்ச்சனை செய்யும் போது பக்தி ச்ரத்தையுடன் புஷ்பங்களை மிருதுவாக ஸமர்ப்பிக்கின்றோம். ஸங்கீத தேவதையை ஆராதிக்கும் போது (அதிலும் வீணை வழி) ஸ்வர புஷ்பங்களை மிருதுவாகக் கையாண்டு ஸமர்ப்பணம் செய்வது உத்தமமான முறை.

தானம் என்பது முக்கியமான அம்சமாகும். பாடுபவர்களும், வீணை வாசிப்பவர்களும், நல்ல முறையில் தானம் அப்யாசம் செய்வது, கற்பனையாக ராகம் பாடுவதற்கும், நிரவல் மத்யகாலம் பாடுவதற்கும், மிகவும் பயன் தருவதாகும். வீணையில் தானம் வாசிக்கும் போது தாளத்தந்திகளை உபயோகப்படுத்த வேண்டிய முறையை, வியக்கத்தக்க ரீதியில் நமது முன்னோர்கள் வகுத்துள்ளார்கள். தான ஸம்பிராயத்தில், வீணையில் மீட்டுவிழாமல் ஒலிக்கும் ஸ்வரங்களில் தாளத்தந்திகள் மிருதுவாக ஒலிக்க வேண்டும். மீட்டு விழாத ஸ்வரங்கள் தாளத்தந்திகளின் த்வனியில் முழுமிகுமறைந்து விடக் கூடாது. அந்த ஸ்வரங்களை போஷிப்பது போல தாளத்தந்திகளை மிருதுவாக உபயோகப் படுத்த வேண்டும். ராகபாவத்துடன், லக்ஷணத்திற்குக் கட்டுப்பட்டு ஸ்வரத்தொகுதிகளை தான வரிசைக் கிரமத்தில் அமைத்து, காலப்ரமாண சுத்தத்துடன் தானம் வாசிப்பதுதான் சிறந்த முறை.

பண்டைய காலத்தில் ராகாலாபனை, கிருதி நிரவல், தானம் பல்லவி நிரவல் இவை தான் பிரதானமாகப் பழக்கத்திலிருந்தன என்று என் தந்தையார் காலத்திலிருந்த மற்ற வித்வான்களும் கூறுவார்கள்.

மத்யமகால ஸ்வரம் பாடுவதற்கு ஒவ்வொரு ஸ்வரஸ்தானத்திற்கும் எழுத்தைச் சொல்லியாக வேண்டியிருப்பதால், ராக பாவத்திற்கும் ரக்திக்கும் அடிப்படையான வளைவு குழைவுகளுக்கு இடமில்லாமல் போய்விடுகிறது. இதனால் தான் ராகாலாபனை செய்யும் போது ஏற்படும் ரக்தியும் ஸுகபாவமும் மத்யமகால ஸ்வரம் பாடும்போது ஏற்படுவதில்லை. சொளககால ஸ்வரத்தை ஓரளவு போஷிக்கச் செய்து விடலாம். ஜதிகளை ஸ்வரங்களாக அமைத்துப் பாடும் போது ராகரக்தியும் ஸுசாரக்ரமங்களும் பாதிக்கப்படுகின்றன. விவஹாரம் என்ற பெயரில் ஸ்வரங்களை அடித்துக் கையாளும் போது, அவை ஸ்தானங்களிலிருந்து விலகி, ஸ்வரத்திற்கும் ஸ்தானத்திற்கும் சம்பந்தமில்லாத நிலை ஏற்பட்டு விடுகிறது. ராகபாவமும் ரக்தியும் கெடாமல் ஸ்வரம் பாடும் முறையைக் கையாள்வது தான் உசிதம் என்பது என் அபிப்பிராயம்.

அனைவருக்கும் வணக்கம். நன்றி.



*With Best Compliments*

*From*

**JAIRAJ AGENCIES**

Jiji House, 3rd Floor,  
15, Raveline Street,  
Bombay - 400 001

Phone : Res : 437 1871 / 437 1664

Off : 204 6728 / 204 9521

Tlx : 011 - 86403 LXMI IN

Fax : 91 - 22 - 204 0553

## மஹாலக்ஷ்மி நாடகக் குழு

(சக்தி எத்துறையிலும் கோலோச்சுவாள் என்பதற்கேற்ப ஆண்களின் ஆதிக்கத்தாலேயே இதுகாறும் திகழ்ந்த நாடகத்துறையை சக்தி முற்றுகையிட்டு விட்டாள். அதனின்றி பிறந்த சாதனைகள் தான், “சிந்திக்க வைத்த சீதனம்”, “அக்கரைப் பச்சை”, “பெண்கள் மிரண்டால்...”, முதலியன. மனத்தைத்தொடும் இப்படைப்புகள் மூலம், ஓர் உத்வேகத்துடன் பம்பாயில் ஆரம்பித்த மஹாலக்ஷ்மி நாடகக்குழு, ஓர் இயக்கமாகவே மாறியிருக்கிறது. நாடகத் துறையில் மட்டுமல்ல, அன்றாட வாழ்க்கையில் நாம் காணும் அழுக்குகளை அகற்றி, அகமும், புறமும் முறையே நிச்சலனமாக வாழ்க்கையை ஓர் ஒப்பற்ற நல் வாழ்க்கையாக மாற்றி மகிழ்ந்திட, சக்தி எடுத்துக் கொண்ட ஓர் சாதனமே இவ்வியக்கம். இதன் தோற்றம், நோக்கம், படைப்பு, வரவேற்பு முதலானவைகளை இதன் தலைவி ஸ்ரீமதி ஞானம் பாலஸுப்ரமணியத்தின் வாயிலாகவே அறியலாம். — ஆசிரியர் )

**மஹாலக்ஷ்மி பெண்கள் நாடகக்குழு.** இது 1989 ல் முழுவதும் பெண்களைக் கொண்டே ஆரம்பிக்கப்பட்டது. இதில் உள்ள அங்கத்தினர்கள் 20 பேரும் குடும்பத்தலைவிகள். இரண்டு மூன்று பேர்களே வேலைக்கும் செல்பவர்கள். இதுவரை இக்குழு நான்கு வெற்றிகரமான நாடகங்களை மேடையேற்றி யுள்ளது. இதன் தலைவியைத்தவிர மற்ற அங்கத்தினர்களுக்கு நடிப்பு அனுபவம் முற்றிலும் புதிது. தலைவி திருமதி. பி. ஞானத்திற்கு நடிப்புத்துறை அனுபவம் என்பது 1986 ல் திரு. எஸ்.ஆர். கஸ்தூரி அவர்களின் “மாதுங்கா டிராமாடிக் கிளப்” மூலமாக ஏற்பட்டது.

இதற்கிடையில் ஃபிலிம் டிவிஷன் இயக்குனர் ஒருவர் தலைவியை அணுகி டாக்குமெண்டரி படம் எடுக்க சமூக பிரச்சினையான வரதட்சணையை மையமாக வைத்துக் கதை ஒன்று அமைத்துத்தரக் கோரினார். தலைவி கதை அமைத்துக்கொடுக்க அவருக்கும் பிடித்துப் போய் டில்லியில் ‘அப்ரூவலுக்காக’ அனுப்பப்பட்டு, அது டில்லி ஆபீசை விட்டுத் திரும்ப மறுக்க, திரைக்கதை நாடகக் கதையாக மாற்றப்பட்டு கையிருப்பில் வைத்திருக்கும் வேளையில், ஏன் இதைப்பெண்களாகவே ஏற்று நாடகமாக்கக் கூடாது என்று யோசித்து, நண்பர் திரு. எஸ். ராகவனிடம் வினவ, தைரியமாக நடத்துங்கள், நான் எல்லா உதவியும் செய்து தருகிறேன் என்று கூற பெண்களை கொண்டே இந்த குழு செயல்பட ஆரம்பிக்கத் தொடங்கியது.

இதன் நடுவில் நாடகத்துறையில் பெண்களே இல்லை என்ற அறைக்கூவல் ஒன்று மகளிர் இதழான “மங்கை” யில் வெளிவர “இதோ வந்து விட்டோம்” என்று பதில் குரல் எழுப்பி இக்குழுவில், தைரியமாக இறங்கி செயல்பட்டோம். முதல் நாடகமான “சிந்திக்க வைத்த சீதனம்” அமோக வெற்றியை அடைந்தது. இது வரதட்சணைப் பேயால் அவதியுறும் பல குடும்பங்களின் அவல நிலையை எடுத்துக்காட்டுவதாகும். அடுத்து “அக்கரைப் பச்சை”, அந்நிய மோகத்திற்குப் பலியான குடும்பங்களின் இழப்பைப் பிரதிபலிப்பதாகும். இதுவும் ஏக போக பாராட்டைப் பெற்றது. அடுத்து “மாமியார் மைனஸ் இன்லா” (அதாவது அம்மா), “நான் நாரியானால்” என்ற இரட்டை நாடகம். “மா மை லா” வில் மாமியார், மருமகனைப் பெண்ணாகவும், மருமகள் அவளை அம்மாவாகவும் நினைக்க ஆரம்பித்தால் பிரச்சனையே இல்லை என்ற கருத்தைக் காமெடியாக எடுத்துச் சொன்னோம். “நான்

நாடியானால்" கதை என்று பெரிதாக இல்லை. காமெடி நாடகமும் போட முடியும் என்று சவாலாக ஏற்று நடத்தினோம். அதுவும் வெற்றியையே தேடித் தந்தது. நான்காவது "பெண்கள் மிரண்டால்". இது பல குடும்பத்தின் ஆண் ஆதிக்கம், திமிர், மனைவியையோ, மற்ற பெண்களையோ, தாழ்வாக எடைபோடும் முரட்டு புருஷனை அடக்க முடிவு செய்து, சாது பெண்கள் மிரள ஆரம்பித்தால் என்ன நடக்கும் என்பதையும், பெண்களால் எதையும் சாதிக்க முடியும் என்பதையும் வலியுறுத்தவே தோற்றுவிக்கப்பட்டது இந்த நாடகம்.

இந்த நாடகத்தைப்பார்த்த பம்பாய் ஸ்ரீ ஷண்முகானந்தா சங்கீத ஸ்பா நிர்வாகிகள் ஒரு மனதாக பாராட்டியதோடு இதன் தலைவர் டாக்டர் வி. சுப்பிரமணியன் அவர்கள், "இந்த நாடகத்தைத் தமிழ் பாஷையோடு மட்டும் நிறுத்தினால் போதாது. அனைத்து மொழியிலும் மொழி பெயர்த்து அனைவரும் கண்டு தங்களை மாற்றிக் கொள்ளச் செய்ய வேண்டும்" என்று கூறியது இந்நாடகத்தின் வெற்றிக்கு சான்றிதழாகும். கதை, வசனம், இயக்கம், நடிப்பு என்று அனைத்து பொறுப்பையும் பெண்களே ஏற்று நடத்துவதுதான் இக்குழுவின் சிறப்பு அம்சம். இது மாதிரி செயல்படுவது இதுதான் முதல் இந்திய தமிழ் பெண்கள் குழு.

பணம் சம்பாதிப்பது இக்குழுவின் நோக்கமல்ல. சிலவிற்கு வேண்டிய ஊதியத்தைதான் சபாக்காரர்களிடமிருந்து பெற்றுக்கொள்கிறார்கள். சமூகத்தில் பரவலாக கருதப்படும் பல முட்டாள்தனமான எண்ணங்களைப்பிட்டு வைத்து மக்களைச் சிந்திக்கத் தூண்டுவதுதான் இதன் நோக்கம். இவர்களது அடுத்த நாடகம் "பாசத்தின் பரிமாணம்". பெண் குழந்தைகளுத்தான் பெற்றோரிடம் பாசம் அதிகம், பிள்ளைக்குழந்தைகளுக்குக் கிடையாது என்ற கருத்தை மாற்றி ஆண் குழந்தைகளுக்கும் சரி, சமமான பாசம் உண்டு என்பதை ஜனங்களுக்குப் புரிய வைத்து பல குடும்பங்களின் குழப்பத்தைத் தீர்த்து வைக்கப் போகிறது இந்நாடகம்.

பெண்களுக்கு வேறு வேலையில்லை. பொழுது போகாமல் நாடகம் போடுகிறார்கள் என்று பலர் கூறுவார்கள். இது முற்றிலும் அபத்தம். பெண்களுக்கு முக்கியமாக, பொறுப்புள்ள குடும்பத்தலைவிகளுக்கு ஏது நேரம்.? ஆண்களுக்கு எட்டு மணி நேரம் வேலை என்றால் பெண்களுக்கு காலையிலிருந்து முதல் இரவுபடுக்கும் வரை "ரூயுட்டி" நேரம் தான். கணவன், குழந்தைகள் பராமரிப்பு அவர்களது படிப்பு, வயதான பெற்றோர்கள், வீடு வேலைக்காரி அத்தனை பேருடைய நேரத்தையும் அனுசரித்து, சமையல் வேலைகளைக் குறையிலாமல் முடித்து, ஒத்திகைக்குப் பல மணிநேரங்கள் ஒதுக்கி, நாடகம் முடிந்து வீடு திரும்பினால் இரவு ஏந்தேரமானாலும் இவன் போய் பாலுக்கு உறை ஊத்தினால்தான் அடுத்த நாள் தயிர் 'டேபிளுக்கு' வரும். ஒரு நாள் மறந்து விட்டால் 'நாடகத்தில் நடித்தால் போதுமே' என்ற கணவனின் இடக்கு சொல்லை தவிர்த்து வேறெதுவும் கிடைக்காது. ஒரு பெண் நாடகத்தில் வெற்றி படைக்கிறாள் என்பது பொழுது போக்கிற்காக செயல்படுவது அல்ல. ஆண்கள் நாடகத்தில் கணவன் ஆபீசிலிருந்து வந்து மனைவி தந்த காபியை குடித்து விட்டு ஒத்திகைக்கு சென்றால் கணவன் வருகைக்காக மனைவி காத்திருப்பாள். ஆனால் பெண்களுக்கு? இத்தனைக் கஷ்டங்கள் உள்ளன என்பதைப் பொது ஜனங்கள் அறிய வேண்டும்.

இக்குழு சென்னையிலும் நாடகங்களை பல முறை மேடையேற்றியதோடு பலரின் பாராட்டுத்தலையும் பெற்றது. கலை உலக நாடக உலக, சினிமா உலக பிரமுகர்கள் பலர் வந்து நாடகத்தை பார்த்தோடு TV, ஷண்முகம் அவர்களின் நாடகத்திற்குப்பிறகு 30 ஆண்டுகளுக்குப் பிறகு இது மாதிரி நல்ல கருத்தை எடுத்து சொல்லும் நாடகத்தை இப்போதுதான் பார்த்தோம் என்ற பாராட்டையும் பெற்றது.

## Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha [Regd.]

292, Jayshankar Yagnik Marg, Bombay-400 022.

Phones : 4078888/4092244/4092211

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